

Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅgau Jayataḥ

Prabandha Pañcakam

Five Essential Essays

**Refuting Common Misconceptions
In Our Vaiṣṇava Community Today.**

❖ **The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya
& Sannyāsa**

❖ **Pañcarātriḥ & Bhāgavata Guru-paramparā.**

❖ **The Gauḍīya Sampradāya is in the Line of Madhvācārya.**

❖ **Bābājī Veśa & Siddha-praṇālī.**

❖ **The Eligibility to Hear Rāsa-līlā Kathā.**

**Tridaṇḍisvāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja**

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Introduction

Śrī Śācīnandana Gaura-hari descended upon the surface of this world adorned with the sentiments and bodily lustre of Śrī Rādhā and mercifully bestowed in charity a type of Kṛṣṇa-prema which had not been given at any time before during this kalpa. By also instigating the appearance in this world of His eternal pastime associates such as Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda and the Six Gosvāmīs headed by Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha, He distributed that very specific aspect of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa. By encouraging devotees from all sectors of society such as Ṭhākura Haridāsa, Śrīvaṣa Paṇḍita, Murāri Gupta, Paramānanda Purī and Brahmānanda Bhārātī, to engage in the activities of preaching śuddha-bhakti, He made a success of the siddhānta: “kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī śudra kene naya.” Although Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara was a brahmacārī wearing saffron cloth and was considered to be under the authority of the Dvārakā Pīṭha in the Śāṅkara sampradāya at the time of his residence in Vārāṇasī, he later became Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s chief assistant. Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura appeared in a family of yavanas (mohammedans) and was not initiated in any particylar sampradāya, yet Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu conferred upon him the title of “Nāmācārya”. Being extremely magnanimous, He accepted into His

fold devotees who had appeared in different castes and creeds and in various countries of Bhārat Varṣa. In this way śuddha-bhakti was preached throughout the entire world in a matter of days.

However, nowadays, as in the field of politics, we find that envy, hatred, bickering, insubordination or reluctance in the matter of accepting the guidance of senior authorities and other anomalies, have also entered the arena of *dharma*. In former times everyone used to deeply revere the axiom “*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthā*” and honour the principle of *ānugatya*, (accepting the guidance of one’s respectable superiors). Due to the deteriorating influence of time, some narrow-minded modernists want to cut away at the holy thread of *ānugatya* in the ancient *paramparā*-system and destroy friendship between the pure *sampradāyas*. They consider themselves important by inventing an imaginary process of *bhajana* and then establishing it as authentic. These people who are creating factions within the *sampradāya* cannot understand that by their ignoble endeavours, contrary to serving the *mano* ‘*bhiṣṭa* or innermost heart’s desire of Kali-yuga *pāvana āvatārī* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they are digging up the roots of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

Those who accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s philosophy of acintya bhedābheda-tattva and engage in sādhana-bhajana under His guidance, who are cultivating devotional service according to the conceptions of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda and the Six Gosvāmīs, those who are preaching their conceptions throughout the whole world and who accept the ‘hare kṛṣṇa’ mahā-mantra and the method of bhajana prescribed by them, are all included within the family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. There may be many branches among them such as the branches of Śrī Nityānanda, Advaita, Narottama and Syāmānanda, however they are all included in this Gaura-parivāra, the family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Among them some may be householders, some renunciates, others sannyāsīs, some may wear saffron cloth and others white cloth. However, if they subscribe to the aforementioned conceptions, how can they be excluded from the family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu? The principal instruction of Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu is:

*trṇād api sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass which has been trampled beneath everyone’s feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.”

In the light of this verse, where is there any place for enmity and ill-feeling among the members of the pure Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya? What to speak of the other Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas of today, even in the Śāṅkara sampradāya, we see a unity and anugātya, or adherence to the principles of predecessors, which is lacking everywhere in our Gauḍīya Sampradāya. Therefore, with folded hands, it is our earnest prayer that, after deeply and seriously studying this Prabandha Pañcakam, the camaraderie within the pure sampradāya may be protected and preserved.

In this book there are five essays. 1) The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya and Sannyāsa. 2) Pañcarātriḥ and Bhāgavata Guruparamparā. 3) The Gauḍīya Sampradāya is in the Line of Madhvācārya. 4) Bābājī Veśa and Siddha-praṇālī. 5) The Eligibility to Hear Rāsa-līlā Kathā. I wrote the first of these essays fourteen years ago and it was published in Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā in the Hindi language (year 4, issues 2 to 4). The second, third and fourth essays have been selected from my composition entitled “Ācārya Kesarī Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī - His Life and Teachings.” The fifth essay was written as an introduction to my commentary on the Veṇu-gīta of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam entitled, “Ānanda Varddhinī”.

In the course of writing these essays, it was inevitable that the names of persons, past and present, who have encouraged various unfavourable opinions, would be mentioned therein. Nevertheless, it was not my intention to make anyone look insignificant or

minimize anyone out of malice. If reading these essays causes pain to anyone's heart then I beg for forgiveness.

Praying for a slight trace of the mercy of Śrī Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa.

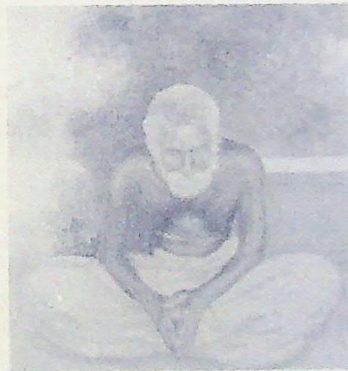
Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī Tirobhāva Tithi
Samvat 2056, Śravaṇa, Kṛṣṇā pañcami
2nd August 1999



Śrī Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī



Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



Śrī Gaura Kiśora Dāsa
Bābājī



Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta
Sarasvatī Ṭhākura



Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī



Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya & Sannyāsa

Nowadays, as in the field of politics, we find that envy, hatred, bickering, insubordination or reluctance in the matter of accepting the guidance of senior authorities and other anomalies, have also entered the arena of *dharma*. In former times everyone used to deeply revere the axiom “*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthā*” and honour the principle of *ānugāya*, (accepting the guidance of one’s respectable superiors). Due to the deteriorating influence of time, some narrow-minded modernists want to cut away at the holy thread of *ānugāya* in the ancient *paramparā*-system and destroy friendship between the pure *sampradāyas*. They consider themselves important by inventing an imaginary process of *bhajana* and then establishing it as authentic. These people who are creating factions within the *sampradāya* cannot understand that by their ignoble endeavours, contrary to serving the *mano* ‘*bhīṣṭa* or innermost heart’s desire of Kali-yuga *pāvana āvatārī* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they are digging up the roots of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

Recently Śrī Śyāmalāl Hakīm of Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana edited a commemorative publication entitled “Mahāprabhu Śrī Gaurāṅga”. Beautiful articles, full of excellent *siddhānta*, by some of Vṛndāvana’s

most respectable scholars, *gosvāmīs* and *vaiṣṇava ācāryas* were included in this publication. However, some essays by the editor and a few new authors were actually contrary to *śāstra* and based on a futile malice meant to ruin camaraderie within the pure *sampradāyas*. In these essays they have tried hard to advertise their own erudition in the matter of establishing the pure, unfettered truth of the *sampradāyika* conception, simply to procure a following among those who might accept them as *ācāryas*. Their completely misguided and groundless viewpoint is nothing but an ill-motivated attempt to conceal the sun. Therefore these articles are a disturbance to *vaiṣṇavas* of the unalloyed Śrī Gauḍīya tradition.

The publication in question contains a number of incoherent remarks such as, "In Kali-yuga, acceptance of the renounced order of *sannyāsa* is invalid and against the *vedic* injunctions." "It is forbidden for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas to wear *gairika* (saffron) cloth." "The *sannyāsa* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Madhvācārya and others is not *vedic*." "Those who observe *varṇāśrama-dharma* cannot enter the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *bhajana-praṇālī* unless they renounce their social position." "The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya has no connection with the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya." "There is a difference between the conceptions of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa." "On receiving the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī became famous by the name of Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī."

After reading these mistaken viewpoints, the worshipful *vaiṣṇavas* encouraged this poor and insignificant person to present the opposing arguments. Carrying the order of those worshipful *vaiṣṇavas* upon my head, I am beginning this holy task. First of all, holding within my heart a particle of dust from the lotus feet of the protector of the Śrī Brahma Mādhva Gauḍīya Sampradāya, who is situated in the tenth generation of the spiritual hierarchy from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, my Paramārādhyatama Gurudeva, Ācārya Kesarī Nitya-līlā Praviṣṭa Om Visnupāda Aṣṭottaraśata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, I am presenting this essay entitled, "The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya and Sannyāsa."

The *varṇāśrama* social order is the backbone of Indian *sanskṛti* or *sanātana dharma* and its heart is *bhagavata-prema*. The relationship between the *varṇāśrama*-system and *bhagavata-prema* is the same as the relationship between the body and the *ātmā*. Although the *ātmā* is of primary importance, the body is not to be entirely neglected in the conditioned stage. Similarly *varṇāśrama-dharma* is not to be completely neglected while in the conditioned stage of life. However it is not correct to propose that *varṇāśrama-dharma* is the ultimate word in *dharma*. On becoming situated in *ātmā-dharma*, that is *bhagavata-sevā*, the aim and object of *varṇāśrama* is fulfilled. Only in that stage is it possible to be completely indifferent to *varṇāśrama-dharma* and remain absorbed in unalloyed *bhagavata-bhajana*. Wherever there is no *varṇāśrama*-system we also see a lack of *ātmā-dharma* or pure *bhagavata-bhakti*. At the most we see a semblance or perverted reflection of *bhakti*. Therefore respect for *daiva-varṇāśrama* is evident in all the *saṁpradāyas* of *dharma* in India. The practitioner of *bhakti* can remain in whichever *āśrama* is favourable for his *sādhana-bhajana* or, when he is qualified, he can completely renounce *varṇāśrama*. It should be especially noted that the regulations of *varṇāśrama* have no control over those who are beyond *anartha-nivṛtti* and in whom *bhāva* has made its appearance. As long as such a stage is not attained, it is desirable for Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the line of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to externally accept *varṇāśrama* while remaining detached and keeping the false ego of identifying oneself with it far away. However, the astonishing and novel conception of Śrī Hakīmji does not turn out to be genuine on the testing stone of this *siddhānta*.

The main arguments presented by Śrīyuta Hakīmji in opposition to Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas accepting *sannyāsa* and saffron cloth are as follows:

Objection 1) In the Vedas *sannyāsa* is described as the fourth *āśrama*. One can enter this *āśrama* only after passing through the other three *āśramas*, namely *brahmacarya*, *grhastha* and *vānaprastha*. There is no mention of any other type of *sannyāsa* in the Veda *śāstra*. Buddhadeva, who was opposed to the Vedas, initiated a new method of *sannyāsa*. The covered Buddhist, Śrīpād Śaṅkarācārya then imitated him by accepting *sannyāsa* at the age of only eight years old without

having first entered the other three *āśramas*. Thus his *sannyāsa* was not *vedic*. More recently some *ācāryas* initiated this same system of *sannyāsa* in their own *sampradāyas*. Actually this *sannyāsa* is not prescribed by the Vedas.

Objection 2) It is forbidden to accept *sannyāsa* in Kali-yuga:

*aśvamedham gavālbham sannyāsam palapaitṛkam
devareṇa sutotpatti kalau pañca vivarjayet*

“Five practices are forbidden in Kali-yuga: horse sacrifices, cow sacrifices, accepting *sannyāsa*, offering oblations of flesh to one’s forefathers and conceiving a child in the womb of one’s elder brother’s wife.” (Śrī Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Kṛṣṇajanmakhaṇḍa 185.180)

Objection 3) The custom of *sannyāsa* is not in current in the *sampradāya* founded by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. From among the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who have taken shelter at the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana, no one has ever accepted *sannyāsa*. Until the very end of their lives they kept the same names by which they were known before renouncing their homes.

Objection 4) After delivering Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, alluding to Himself through the words of Śrī Sārvabhauma, expounded the conclusion that *sannyāsa* is unnecessary, detrimental and above all opposed to *bhakti-dharma*. (Śrī Caitanya-bhagavata 3.3.30)

Objection 5) Śrīman Mahāprabhuji never instructed anyone to accept *sannyāsa*. Rather He has given the instruction to renounce the system of *varṇāśrama*: *eta saba chāḍi āra varṇāśrama dharma, akiñcana hañā laya kṛṣṇaika śaraṇa*: “Without hesitation, one should take exclusive shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with full confidence, giving up all bad association and even neglecting the regulative principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*.” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.22.93)

Objection 6) Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has stated that it is forbidden for Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas to wear saffron cloth: *rakta vastra vaiṣṇavera parite nā yuyāya*. (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta 3.13.61)

Objection 7) The acceptance of *sannyāsa* has not been mentioned anywhere among the sixty-four *aṅgas* of *bhakti*.

Objection 8) In his commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.18.22), Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has established the fact that devotees are not members of the *āśrama* system by the phrase: "*bhaktasyānāśramitvaṇca*".

Being ignorant of the pure principles of the *sampradāya* and even offering a palmful of water for the passing away of common courtesy in spiritual matters, the honourable Śrī Hakīmji is pointlessly creating frivolous controversy and factions in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya by imitating the *apasiddhāntic* conceptions of authors who, though expert in mundane knowledge and dry logic, are completely bereft of genuine realisation and are thus not even slightly fearful of committing severe *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. As if this were not sufficient, he does not hesitate to present thoroughly false and perverse explanations of scriptures such as Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta by hiding the facts mentioned therein. Neither does he hesitate to refer to *ācāryas* of the pure *bhakti-sampradāyas* such as Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Madhvācārya as *muktivādīs* (salvationists) and non-*vedic sannyāsīs*. Furthermore, he is not even afraid to proclaim that Śrī Mādhavendra Purī and others are *advaitavādi-sannyāsīs*. Now we will systematically expose the insubstantiality of the aforementioned statements which are all offensive and contrary to *śāstra*.

Refutation 1) Upon seeing the ideas of Śrī Hakīmji it appears that he has derived his understanding of the Vedas from the statements written in the supplement to Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta published by Śrīyukta Rādhā-govindanātha. If he had personally read the *vedas*, *upaniṣads*, *smṛti*, *purāṇas* and other *śāstras* then he would never have written such assertions which have no basis in scripture. It may be that his lack

of knowledge of the *sanskrit* language poses an obstacle to his personally reading the *śruti*, *smṛti* and so on. If so, then it is absolutely improper to write anything without having personally studied those *śāstras*. He should have understood that by writing against the scriptural conclusion, he would become a laughing stock among the community of learned scholars who know *śāstra*. *Sannyāsa* is a *vedic* custom which is applicable at all times. To illustrate this we are presenting several examples from *śruti*, *smṛti* and *purāṇa* on the subject of *sannyāsa*. The verdict of *śruti* is as follows:

(a) *sa hovāca yājñavalkyaḥ/ brahmacaryam samāpta grhī bhavet/ grhī bhūtvā vanī bhavet/ vanī bhūtvā pravrajat/ yadi vetarathā brahmacaryādeva pravrajed grhād vā vanād vā/ atha punaravratī vā vratī vā snātako va'snātako vā utsannāgnīranagniko vā yadahareva virajet tadahareva pravrajat.*

Variations of this *mantra*, with only one or two words different, can be found in (i) Jāvālopaniṣad (4.1), (ii) Yājñavalkyopaniṣad (saṅkhyā 1) and (iii) Paramahansa Parivrajakopaniṣad (saṅkhyā 2). The meaning is:

“The saintly king Janaka Mahārāja inquired from the great sage Yājñavalkya, ‘O Bhagavān! Please explain to me the qualifications and regulations governing the acceptance of *sannyāsa*.’ Yājñavalkya replied, ‘First of all, strictly observing the vow of *brahmacarya*, one should study the Vedas in the home of one’s *guru*. Then, after appropriately observing the occupational duties of the *grhastha-āśrama*, one should accept *vānaprastha*. Finally, after *vānaprastha* one should accept *sannyāsa*. Before entering the *grhastha-āśrama*, if one develops a powerful sense of detachment from material life while still in the stage of *brahmacarya*, then one should accept *sannyāsa* directly from the *brahmacarya-āśrama*. Otherwise, as soon as one’s *vairāgya* is very strong, it is quite appropriate to accept *sannyāsa* from the stages of *grhastha* or *vānaprastha*. In other words, the principle is that one may accept *sannyāsa* from the position of any *āśrama* upon developing genuine detachment. Whether one’s study of the six limbs of the Vedas

is complete or not; having completed one's study of the Vedas, whether one has taken bath as prescribed by the Vedas or not; having ignited the sacrificial fire, whether one has duly dismissed the presiding deity of the sacrificial fire or not; whether one is married or a widower; in any condition of life, one can accept *sannyāsa* when intense *vairāgya* manifests in one's character."

A further explanation of *sannyāsa* is also clearly found in Jāvālopaniṣad from the *śukla* section of Yājurveda:

(iv) *atha parivrāḍ vivarṇavāsā munḍo'parigrahaḥ śuciradrohī bhaikṣāno brahmabhūyāya bhavatīti/yadyāturaḥ syānmanasā vācā vā sannyaset* (15)

"Those who accept *parivrajyā* (*sannyāsa*) should wear cloth which has been coloured saffron by *geru* (red stone). They should have their hair shaved and completely renounce the association of their wives, sons and other relatives. Immediately after that they should purify themselves externally and internally by fully executing *sādhana*. Giving up all sense of hostility towards others, they should perform the *upāsana* of *brahma* in a pure and solitary place. Distressed persons should accept *sannyāsa* only by words and mind."

Now the question may arise, "Is the custom of *sannyāsa* genuine or is it a concoction?" In answer to this it is stated:

(v) *eṣa panthā brahmanā hānuvitastenaivaiti sannyāsī brahma vidityevamevaiṣa bhagavānniti vai yājñavalkyaḥ* (16)

"The origin of the custom of *sannyāsa* is Lord Brahmā, the grandfather of all the worlds. The *sannyāsīs* who take shelter of this path of renunciation attain the *sac-cid-ānanda brahma* and become competent to know everything. Thus the path of *sannyāsa* is not imaginary; it is real. Having heard this instruction from Yājñavalkya, Atri Ṛṣī accepted it by addressing him, 'O Bhagavān Yājñavalkya!'"

vi) *tridaṇḍam kamaṇḍalu śakyam jalapavitram patram śikhā
yajnopavītañca ityetat sarva bhusvāhetyapsu parityajyātmānam-
anvicchet* (18)

“After this, on attaining the stage of *paramahansa*, the signs of *sannyāsa* such as the *tridaṇḍa*, *kamaṇḍalu*, *śikhā*, *vasan*, waterpot, *kanthā*, *kaupīn*, lower cloth and *uttarīya* are also discarded.”

Now kindly examine the statements of *smṛti*:

(vii) *viraktaḥ sārva-kāmeṣu parivrājyam sabhāśrayet
ekākī vicarennityam tyaktvā sarvaparigraham*
(Viṣṇu Smṛti 4.2)

ekadaṇḍī bhavedvāpi tridaṇḍī vāpi vā bhavet
(Viṣṇu Smṛti 4.10)

tridaṇḍam kuṇḍika caiva bhikṣādhāram tathaiva ca
(Viṣṇu Smṛti 4.12)

*sūtram tathaiva grhṇīyānnityameva bahūdaka
īṣatkṛt kāṣāyasya liṅgamāśritya tiṣṭhata*
(Viṣṇu Smṛti 4.18)

“One who is detached from all types of worldly desires should accept *sannyāsa*. After accepting *sannyāsa*, he should travel alone and he should maintain his life by whatever is available in the way of alms without even begging. He should carry *ekadaṇḍa* (single staff) or *tridaṇḍa* (triple staff). The *bahūdaka tridaṇḍī-sannyāśī* should carry a bowl for alms and a *kamaṇḍalu*. He should wear a sacred thread and light-coloured saffron cloth. Furthermore he should always meditate on Bhagavān within his heart.”

It has also been stated in *Hārītas-mṛti*:

(viii) *tridaṇḍam vaiṣṇavam samyak santatam samaparvakam
veṣṭitam kṛṣṇagobālarajjumaccaturaṅgulam*

*saucārthamāsanārtham ca munibhiḥ samudāhṛtam
kaupīnācchādanam vāsaḥ kanthā śtānīvārīṇīm*

*pāduke cāpi grhṇīyātkuryānnānthasya saṅgraham
etāni tasya līṅgāni yateḥ proktāni sarvadā*

(Hārītasṃṛti 6.6,7,8)

“One should carry a *tridaṇḍa* made from bamboo rods which all have the same number of knots. The rods should be bound together by a strip of cloth measuring four fingers in width and a rope of hairs from a black cow. For the sake of purity and posture one should accept *kaupīn* given by *munis*. To banish the effects of coldness one should accept a ragged cloth and wooden sandals. One should not collect any other items. These are said to be the signs of a *sannyāsī* in all periods of time (four *yugas*).”

It has been stated in the Mahānīrvāṇa Tantra that even in Kali-yuga the members of all four *varṇas* and also common people outside the social castes have the right to accept *sannyāsa*:

(ix) *avadhūtāśramo devi kalau sannyāsa ucyate
vidhinā yena karttavyastam sarvam śṛṇu sāmpratam*

*brahmajñāne samutpanne virate sarva karmaṇi
adhyātmavidyā nīpuṇaḥ sannyāsāśramamāśrayet*

*brāhma kṣatriyo vaiśyaḥ śūdraḥ sāmānya eva ca
kulāvadhūta samskāre pañcānāmadhikāritā*

*vīprānamītareṣāṅca varṇānām prabale kalau
ubhayatrāśrame devi! sarveṣāmadhikāritā*

(Mahānīrvāṇa Tantra 8th ullāsa)

“O Devi! In Kali-yuga the *avadhūta-āśrama* is called *sannyāsa*. Now hear from me about the regulations governing this *āśrama*. One who is expert in the transcendental science of *bhagavat-tattva*, who is detached from all kinds of fruitive activities and in whom *brahma-jñāna* has

awakened, should accept the renounced order of life, *sannyāsa*. Five categories of people, namely *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *sūdras* and common people from outside the social orders, can be qualified in the matter of undergoing this *sannyāsa-saṁskara*. Moreover, even when the influence of Kali is powerful, *vīpras* and also members of the other social orders have the right to accept *sannyāsa*."

In Manusmṛti it is stated:

- (x) *vāgdaṇḍo'tha manodaṇḍaḥ kāyadaṇḍastathaiva ca
yasyaite nihitā buddhau tridaṇḍīti sa ucyate*
(Manusmṛti 12.20)

"One who inflicts discipline (*daṇḍa*) on his words, body and mind is called a *tridaṇḍī-sannyāśī*."

In the immaculate *purāṇa*, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava about the origin of the four *āśramas*:

- (xi) *gṛhāśramo jaghanato brahmacarya hr̥do mama
vakṣaṣṭhalādvane vāsaḥ sannyāsaḥ śirasi sthitaḥ*

"The *gṛhastha-āśrama* has come from my thighs, the *brahmacarya-āśrama* from my heart and the *vānaprastha-āśrama* from my chest. However, *sannyāsa* is situated upon my head."
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.17.14)

Futhermore:

- (xii) *etām samāsthāya parātmāniṣṭhā
madhyāsītām pūrva tamairmaharṣibhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi durantapāram
tamo mukundāṅghriniṣevayaiva*

The Avantī Bhikṣu said, "Great *ṛṣis* and *munis* of yore have taken shelter of this *sannyāsa-āśrama* in the form of *parātmāniṣṭhā* (steadfast devotion to Bhagavān). Having taken shelter of this same *āśrama*, I will also easily cross over the insurmountable ocean of ignorance by rendering service to the lotus feet of Śrī Mukunda." (S.B. 11.23.57)

In Skanda Purāṇa:

- (xiii) *śikhī yajñopavītī syāt tridaṇḍī sakamaṇḍaluh
sa pavitraśca kāṣāyī gāyatrīṇca japet sadā*

“A *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī* should keep a *śikhā*, wear a sacred thread and carry a *kamaṇḍalu*. He should dress in saffron cloth and remaining ever pure, he should always chant the *gāyatrī-mantra*.”

In Padma Purāṇa:

- (xiv) *ekavāsā dvivāsā vā śikhī yajñopavītavān
kamaṇḍalukaro vidvānstridaṇḍo yāti tatparam*

“A learned *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī* should wear an outer cloth and *uttarīya*, keep a *śikhā*, a sacred thread and *kamaṇḍalu*. Having done so he should remain absorbed in *bhagavat-bhāva* (transcendental emotion).”
(Svargakhaṇḍa Ādi. chapter 31)

(xv) In Samskāra Dīpikā, the supplement to Śrī Hari Bhakti Vilāsa, written by Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa samskāra* and the regulations in regard to wearing *dor-kaupīn* and saffron cloth are clearly documented. An ancient manuscript of this text is preserved in the royal library in Jaipur. This scripture has been published by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and it is also mentioned in the Śrī Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna.

In ancient times, the custom of accepting *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* was current among most *vedic sannyāsīs*. A rare few also used to accept *ekadaṇḍa*. The rules governing the acceptance of *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* are mentioned everywhere throughout *śruti*, *smṛti*, *purāṇa* and *āgama śāstra*, whereas the regulations in regard to *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsa* are few and far between. In the stage of *bahūdaka-sannyāsa*, along with the three *daṇḍas* signifying the discipline of speech, mind and body, another *prādeśamātra*¹ *daṇḍa* representing *jīva*, the soul, is attached in one place. Thus the *tridaṇḍa* is a composite of four *daṇḍas*. The custom of

(¹). *prādeśamātra*. A measurement equal to the maximum distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the index finger.

tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa is current in the *sampradāyas* of Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī. The custom of *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsa* current in the *sampradāya* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya is also *vedic sannyāsa*. There is no system of accepting *sannyāsa* among the Buddhists since they are opposed to the Vedas. They become mendicants without any purificatory rites such as receiving a *daṇḍa* and so on. Thus Hakīmji's opinion that Śrīpād Śaṅkarācārya imitated the *sannyāsa* of the Buddhists is completely untrue and speculative. And straying even further from the truth is the idea that the system of *sannyāsa* in the *sampradāyas* of Ācārya Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī came into use by copying the *sannyāsa*-rites of the Śrī Śaṅkarācārya *sampradāya*.

We have already shown that upon attaining the qualification of intense detachment, the custom of accepting *sannyāsa* from the position of any *āśrama* or *varṇa*, at any time, regardless of one's age, is proper in all respects according to the *vedic* scriptures. Thus Ācārya Śaṅkara's acceptance of *sannyāsa* directly from the *brahmacarya-āśrama* at the age of eight is fully sanctioned by the *vedas*.

The *vaiṣṇava-ācārya* Śrī Madhva accepted *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsa* while maintaining his *vaiṣṇava* method of worship and the same pure *siddhānta* (i.e. five types of distinction; distinction between the *jīva* and *īśvara* even in the state of liberation; the *jīva* is a servant of Hari and so on.) This is not an imitation of Śaṅkara's *sannyāsa* because Ācārya Śaṅkara is not the original founder of the custom of *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsa*. A long time before Śaṅkara, in the *vedic* age, *ekadaṇḍa* and *tridaṇḍa* were used. According to the Yājñavalkyopaniṣad, Śrī Brahmājī is the original founder of the *sannyāsa-āśrama* and in ancient times great ṛṣis such as Saṁvartaka, Āruṇi, Śvetaketu, Durvāsā, Rbhu, Nidāgha, Dattātreya, Śuka, Vāmadeva and Hārīta achieved the *paramahansa* stage immediately after accepting *sannyāsa*. In later times accounts can be found of 700 *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsīs* in the Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī *Sampradāya*. They were all pure *vaiṣṇavas* devoted to the service of Bhagavān.

According to the Sanskrit literature entitled Śrī Vallabha-Digvijaya, Śrī Vallabhācārya became famous by the name of Pūrṇānanda Yati after

accepting *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* in his old age from Śrī Mādhavendra Yati at Hanumān Ghāt in Kāśī. It is a well-known fact that Śrī Vallabhācārya performed worship in pure *vātsalya-rasa*. According to Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta he accepted the *mantra* for the worship of Yugala-kīśora from Śrī Gaura-śakti Gadādhara Paṇḍita in Jagannātha Purī and from *vātsalya-rasa* he was inspired to progress to the worship of Kīśora-Gopāla.

*vallabhatera-bhaṭṭa haya vātsalya-upāsana
bāla-gopāla-mantra tenho karena sevana*

“Śrī Vallabha Bhaṭṭa was accustomed to worshipping Kṛṣṇa as a child. Therefore he had been initiated into the Bāla-Gopāla-*mantra* and was thus serving Him accordingly.”

*paṇḍitera sane tāra mana phiri gela
kīśora-gopāla-upāsanāya mana dila*

“In the association of Gadādhara Paṇḍita his mind was converted and he dedicated his heart to the worship of Kīśora-Gopāla.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya 7.148,149)

Thus the accusation made by Śrī Hakīmī that only *kevala-muktivādīs* (impersonalists) accept *sannyāsa* and that all the other *ācāryas* have imitated the *sannyāsa* of the Śāṅkara *sampradāya* is also thoroughly groundless and untrue. In regard to the *sannyāsa* of Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī and Śrī Vallabhācārya we have shown that they were pure *vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs* dedicated to *bhakti*. Now we shall deliberate upon the *sannyāsa* of Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Madhvācārya.

At first, Śrī Hakīmī considered the *sannyāsa* of these two *ācāryas* to be non-*vedic*. Then again, he was obliged to concede that their *sannyāsa* was *vedic*. However, he accepted that their *sannyāsa* was ordained by the *varṇāśrama*-system by considering them to be *muktivādīs*. *Mukti* is achieved by observing *niṣkāma-varṇāśrama-dharma*, the execution of one's prescribed duties while renouncing the fruits of action. Thus *sannyāsa* is considered appropriate in the *sādhana* for achieving *mukti*.

However, objecting to *sannyāsa* in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya, Śrī Hakīmji professes that since the objective of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is to attain *prema-sevā* in Vraja there is no scope for the custom of *sannyāsa* in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. This assertion of Śrī Hakīmji is also offensive and born of ignorance. Only those personalities who are completely unaware of the authentic literatures of Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Madhvācārya can utter such fictitious statements. According to the authoritative texts of the Śrī Sampradāya such as Śrī Bhāṣya, Vedārtha-saṅgraha, Prapannāmṛta and Gadyatraya, the *jīva* is constitutionally the servant of Bhagavān. On the basis of this established truth, the *jīva* can never attain oneness with *brahma*. The highest *mukti* is servitude to Bhagavān in Vaikuṇṭha. Śrī Madhvācārya is also of the opinion that the *jīva* is the eternal attendant of Śrī Hari and that *mukti* means to attain the service of the lotus feet of Viṣṇu.²

Therefore *mukti* in the form of *bhagavat-sevā* as propounded by these two *sampradāyas* is entirely different from the *nirviśeṣa-mukti* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya which implies the oneness of the *jīva* with *brahma*. If Hakīmji were to see the verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam wherein it is stated, '*kaivalyaika prayojanam*,' would he also consider that the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is a text for *muktivādīs* and that it is opposed to the Śrī Gauḍīya conception? It is not proper to flare up immediately on seeing the words '*mukti*' and '*kaivalya*'. Rather, one should understand the confidential meaning of these words. Employing extensive scriptural evidence and irrefutable arguments, commentators such as Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī have interpreted the word '*kevala*' to mean '*viśuddha-prema*'. In his Prīti Sandarbha, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has defined that the actual purport of the word *mukti* is '*prema-sevā*'. Therefore the aforementioned two *sampradāyas* are not philosophically opposed to the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya. All the *vaiṣṇava sampradāyas* agree unanimously that *viṣṇu-tattva* is the object of our worship, that the relationship between the *jīva* and *brahma* is that of the servant and

(2) (a) *śrīmadhvamate hariḥ paratamaḥ satam jagattattvato bhado jīvagaṇā hareranuṣārā nīcoṣabhāvam gatāḥ* (from the literature of Śrī Jayatīrtha and Śrī Trivikramācārya), (b) '*mokṣam viṣṇavaṅghrilābham*' (Prameyaratnāvalī)

the served, that *bhakti* is the *sādhana* and *bhagavat-sevā* (*prema*) is the objective (*prayojana*). Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Paravyomapati Śrīman Nārāyaṇa are not different from each other in *tattva* (philosophical principles). The distinction between the *sampradāyas* has arisen only due to some specialities in regard to the relationship between the worshiper and the object of worship. Thus the same custom of *sannyāsa* which is practised in the *sampradāyas* of Śrī Rāmānuja, Śrī Madhva and Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī is in accordance with *śāstra* and also fit to be accepted by the followers of Śrī Madhva who comprise the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya. The singular aim and objective of *sannyāsts* such as Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, Śrī Viṣṇu Purī, Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrī Raṅga Purī and Śrī Paramānanda Purī was only *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Śrī Hakīmī or anyone else cannot deny this fact. They had all entered the path of *bhakti* first and then later accepted the dress of *niṣkiñcana-sannyāsa* because it was favourable for *aikāntika-bhakti*, the cultivation of exclusive devotion. Thus, following in the footsteps of these prominent liberated personalities of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya in accordance with the axiom '*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthā*', the custom of *sannyāsa* is also thoroughly appropriate in this *sampradāya*.

Objection 2) In Kali-yuga *sannyāsa* is forbidden for all *sampradāyas*:

*aśvamedham gavāmbham sannyāsam palapaitṛkam
devareṇa sutoṭpattim kalau pañca vivarjayet*

"Five practices are forbidden in Kali-yuga: horse sacrifices, cow sacrifices, accepting *sannyāsa*, offering oblations of flesh to one's forefathers and conceiving a child in the womb of one's elder brother's wife."

(Śrī Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa, Kṛṣṇajanmakhaṇḍa 185.180)

Refutation 2) Herein the point worthy of our consideration is that the instructions of the *vedas*, *upaniṣads*, *purāṇas* and *smṛtis* are applicable at all times (*sārvakālika*). *Sannyāsa* is forbidden on the strength of only one verse from Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa, whereas all the aforementioned authentic scriptures unanimously endorse *sannyāsa* and

saffron cloth for qualified persons in every *yuga*. Thus it is properly understood that this prohibition must be valid under some special circumstances, not all circumstances, or that it refers to a particular type of *sannyāsa*, because elsewhere in that very same Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa the decree to accept *sannyāsa* and wear saffron cloth has been given:

*daṇḍam kamaṇḍalum raktavastram mātrañca dhārayet
nityam pravāśī naikatra sa sannyāsīti kīrtitāḥ*
(Brahma Vaivartta Purāṇa 2.36.9)

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu cited as evidence the verse beginning with '*aśvamedham*' from Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa to Caṇḍa Kāzī in opposition to cow killing, not in connection with *sannyāsa*.

In Padma Purāṇa three types of *sannyāsa* have been mentioned: *jñāna-sannyāsa*, *veda* (*vidvat* or *bhakti*)-*sannyāsa* and *karma-sannyāsa*.

*jñānasannyāsīnaḥ kecidvedasannyāsīno'pare
karmasannyāsīnastvanye trividhāḥ parikīrtitāḥ*
(Padma Purāṇa Ādi 31.)

Of these three, only *karma-sannyāsa* is forbidden in Kali-yuga. Those who have no *ātmā-jñāna* or whose goal is not *bhagavat-bhakti*; yet they accept *sannyāsa* because their senses have grown weak and they are incapable of enjoying the happiness derived from the sense objects, sound, touch, form, taste and smell, are called *karma-sannyāsīs*. A devotee of Bḥagavān is not a *karmī*, thus the question of *karma-sannyāsa* does not arise. The objective of *jñāna-sannyāsa* is *sāyujya-mukti*. It is stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.32):

*āruhya kṛcchrena param padam tataḥ
patantyadho'nādrta yuṣmadaṅghrayaḥ*

"Those who rise up to the transcendental platform by the execution of severe austerities fall down because they have neglected to serve Your lotus feet."

Thus devotees also do not accept *jñāna-sannyāsa* for fear of falling down. *Bhagavat-bhaktas* only accept *veda-sannyāsa* which is also known as *vidvat-sannyāsa*. Even their acceptance of *vidvat-sannyāsa* is only indicative of *parātmaniṣṭhā*, dedication to the lotus feet of Bhagavān. After accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, absorbed in ecstatic emotions, repeatedly recited this verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

*etām samāsthāya parātmaniṣṭhā
madhyāsītām pūrva tamairmaharṣibhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi durantapāram
tamo mukundāṅghriniṣevanaiva*
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.23.57)

Having recited this verse, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

*parātmaniṣṭhā-mātra veṣa dhāraṇa
mukunda sevāya haya saṁsāra tāraṇa*

“The purpose of accepting *sannyāsa* is only to dedicate oneself to the service of Mukunda. By serving Mukunda one can actually be liberated from the bondage of material existence.”

*sei veṣa kaila, ebe vṛndāvane giyā
kṛṣṇāniṣevana kari nibhṛte basiyā*

“After accepting the *sannyāsa* order, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu decided to go to Vṛndāvan and engage Himself wholly and solely in the service of Mukunda in a solitary place.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 3.8, 9)

The regulations in regard to *narottama-sannyāsa* (*vidvat-sannyāsa*) have also been given in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

*ya svakātparato veva jātānirveda ātmavān
hṛdi kṛtvā harim gehāt pravrajet sa narottamaḥ*

“Those self-realised persons who, either by themselves or by the instructions of others, become detached from material existence, having understood that it is simply full of suffering, and who accept *sannyāsa*, holding Śrī Hari within their hearts, are called *narottama*.”

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.13.27)

Thus, after considering this matter and reconciling all its aspects, one arrives at the conclusion that even in Kali-yuga the acceptance of *vidvat-sannyāsa* or *narottama-sannyāsa* (not *karma-sannyāsa*) is consistent with *śāstra* in the case of one in whom detachment from miserable worldly life has appeared and who has completely renounced all material attachments for the sake of unalloyed service to Bhagavān Śrī Mukunda. If it is not despicable for a devotee to engage in *bhajana* while remaining in the *grhastha-āśrama*, then how can it be despicable for one to perform *bhajana* while remaining in the superior *āśrama* of *sannyāsa*? Wherever one may be, one must do *bhajana*. Thus it is incumbent upon the individual to remain in whichever *āśrama* is favourable for his *bhajana*. One should reject any unfavourable elements and, giving up all attachment or identification with one's external position within *varṇāśrama*, engage in single-pointed *hari-bhajana*. This is the conclusion of *śāstra*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said:

*kibā vipra kibā nyāsī sūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa tattva vettā sei guru haya*

“Whether one is a brāhmaṇa, a *sannyāsī* or a *sūdra*, regardless of one's position, one who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva* is a guru.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 8.128)

This statement of Śrīman Mahāprabhu supports the fact that those in the *sannyāsa-āśrama* are also authorised according to the Gauḍīya conception of *bhajana* and that *sannyāsa* can be accepted in this age of Kali. A *sannyāsī* who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva* is honoured as an *ācārya* and guru. Thus *sannyāsa* is neither contemptible nor forbidden.

Objection 3) “In the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya founded by Śrīman Mahāprabhu there is no custom of *saṁnyāsa*.”

Refutation 3) In this connection, those who know *saṁpradāya-tattva* assert that svayam Bhagavān Vraṇendranandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa has appeared in Kali-yuga in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Just as āvatāras such as Śrī Rāmacandra and also Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra Himself have not inaugurated any *saṁpradāya*, similarly, to consider Śrīman Mahāprabhu as the founder of a *saṁpradāya* is incorrect and opposed to *śāstra*. The activity of establishing a *saṁpradāya* is not the duty of Bhagavān. He accomplishes this task through His servants, namely Śrī Brahmājī, Śrī Lakṣmījī, Śrī Rudra and Śrī Sanat Kumāra. If Śrīman Mahāprabhu is accepted as the founder of a *saṁpradāya* then a question mark will be applied to His scripturally proven status as the origin of all incarnations (*bhagavad-āvatārī*) because there is no available evidence to prove that a *saṁpradāya* has ever been inaugurated by any *āvatāra* of Bhagavān. Thus Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Svayaṁ Bhagavān, has not formed or initiated a new *saṁpradāya*. Rather, acting in compliance with His *nara-līlā* (human-like pastimes), He protected the *vaiṣṇava-guru-paramparā* by accepting *dīkṣā* into the Śrī Brahma-Madhva Sampradāya. In doing so He also made this *saṁpradāya* the most excellent of all in regard to its goal (*sādhya*) and method of attainment (*sādhana*) by bestowing the supremely sweet and incomparable system of worship of the topmost and superlatively sweet feature of the worshipable principle (*upāśya-tattva*).

At this point it will not be irrelevant to reveal the fact that Śrīyuta Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda, Śrī Rādhā-govindanāth and Śrī Hakīmījī want to change the body of the ancient *saṁpradāya* by establishing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the founder of His *saṁpradāya* and in doing so they have no fixed *siddhānta*.³ These personalities, like the politicians of the modern era, are also expert at changing their conclusions.

(3) See the first edition of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta published by Śrī Hakīmījī. In his Caitanya Carāṇacumbinī commentary, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 9, verse 249, Hakīmījī has also written that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is not a *saṁpradāyācārya* — a conclusion to which he is now opposed.

Tomorrow they will say the opposite of whatever *siddhānta* they have accepted today. The opinions of those who repeatedly change their viewpoints are never reliable. Śrī Sundārananda Vidyāvinoda has established his own fame by abandoning his *gurudeva* and by his fluctuating *siddhānta*. Śrī Rādhāgovindanāth has written in the first three editions of his publication of Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta that the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is in the line of the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya. Then in the fourth edition, withdrawing his previous conclusion, he has accepted groundless, speculative and defective arguments to establish that the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya is an independent *sampradāya*. The honourable Śrī Rādhāgovindanāth was not a pure *vaiṣṇava* initiated into any *vaiṣṇava sampradāya*. How can those who are bereft of a connection with a pure *guru-paramparā* come to know the confidential and mysterious *sāmpradāyika siddhāntas*? Imitating his *sikṣā-gurus*, Śrī Hakīmji has also defined one type of conclusion in regard to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya*, *sannyāsa veśa* and so on in the commentary of the first edition of his Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, then in the second edition he has defined exactly the opposite conclusion. Wherever there is a lack of *bhajana-sādhana*, wherever there is no factual realization of *tattva* and wherever there is a lack of firm faith in Śrī Guru and the *guru-paramparā*, in that place there can never be steadiness in the unwavering *siddhānta*.

By accepting the opinions of such people, the only gain will be *anartha* and *vaiṣṇava-āparādha*, not *paramārtha* (*prema*). By analyzing the history of the *sampradāyas* it can be seen clearly that until this very day the duty of founding a *sampradāya* has been accomplished exclusively by either the *śakti* or the servants of Viṣṇu. Although Śrī Bhagavān has been called the original founder of *sanātana-dharma* in the statements of *śāstra* such as: *dharman tu sākṣād bhagavat pranitaṁ* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19) and *dharma jagannāthāt sakṣānnārāyaṇāt* (Mahābhārata, śāntiparva 348.54), nevertheless, by scriptural evidence such as: *akartā caiva kartā ca kāryaṁ kāraṇam eva ca* (Mahābhārata, śāntiparva 348.60) it is proven that *sarva kāraṇa-kāraṇa* Śrī Bhagavān, the cause of all causes, does not directly intervene in the task of establishing a *sampradāya*. He causes this to be accomplished through the agency of personalities who are invested with His potency. If it

were not so then instead of being called the Brahma-Sampradāya, Śrī-Sampradāya, Catuḥsana-Sampradāya and Rudra-Sampradāya, the *sampradāyas* would be celebrated by names such as the Śrī Vāsudeva-Sampradāya, Nārāyaṇa-Sampradāya and Saṅkarṣana-Sampradāya. The manifestations of śrī viṣṇu-tattva are the worshipful deities of the *sat* or *sāttvata-sampradāyas*. From among Them, Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu are the *viṣṇu paratattva*. By accepting Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu as only *sampradāya*-founding gurus, then it is inevitable that They will be considered equal to or rivals with Brahmā, Lakṣmījī, Catuḥsana, Śrī Rāmānuja, Śrī Madhva and so on. To consider Them as such is contrary to *siddhānta*. Therefore, in the literature of the Gosvāmīs headed by Śrī Rupa and Sanātana, and in the literature of the succeeding Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ācāryas such as Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, it is not written anywhere that the Śrī Gauḍīya *vaiṣṇavas* are the “Caitanya Sampradāya”. Thus Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu can never be called the founder of a *sampradāya*.

Before accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrī Mādhavendra Purī had accepted *dīkṣā* from Śrī Lakṣmīpati Tīrtha of the Madhva Sampradāya. Later, upon the awakening of intense *vairāgya* and an ardent longing to perform *bhajana* in *vraja-bhāva*, he accepted *sannyāsa* from a *sannyāsī* bearing the title “Purī”. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu (who, according to the opinion of some, is a disciple of Śrī Lakṣmīpati Tīrtha), Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrī Raṅga Purī, Śrī Paramānanda Purī, Śrī Brahmānanda Purī, Śrī Viṣṇu Purī, Śrī Keśava Purī, Śrī Kṛṣṇānanda Purī and Śrī Sukhānanda Purī were all *sannyāsa* disciples of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. He also had many disciples in the *gṛhasṭha āśrama* such as Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, the Sānoḍiyā Vipra from Mathurā and Raghupati Upādhyāya of Maithila. Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, the *sannyāsa-veśa guru* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, had also accepted *dīkṣā* from Śrī Mādhavendra Purī during his household life. Later, to engage exclusively in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*, he accepted *niṣkiñcana-sannyāsa veśa* from a *sannyāsī* bearing the title “Bhāratī”. Śrī Keśava Bhāratī has been described as a disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī in Prema Vilāsa, vilāsa 23.

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara was also a *sannyāsī* wearing saffron cloth. Among all the *premī-bhaktas*, he was the highest *bhāgavata* devotee from the very beginning of his life. Later he accepted *sannyāsa* only for the sake of perfection in unalloyed *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Out of all of these examples, not even one of them had entered the path of *bhakti* after accepting *sannyāsa* in the *advaitavādī* line of Śaṅkara. They were all already situated in the *bhakti-mārga*. Śrī Hakīmjī and Śrī Rādhāgovindanāth say that they had entered the path of *bhakti* after accepting *advaitavādī-sannyāsa* and that they did not give up their previous *sannyāsa* names and *sannyāsa* cloth simply to show respect to their previous *ācāryas*. However the actual facts and history are quite the opposite. Is it that Śrī Īśvara Purī and these other prominent personalities, prior to entering *bhakti-mārga*, had taken *advaita-sannyāsa* from the *advaitavādī* Mādhavendra Purī? And were they *advaitavādīs*? Have Hakīmjī and those greatly realized persons who share his opinion presented any sound evidence to prove this? Will they be able to show some evidence in the future? Were Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara first *advaitavādī sannyāsīs* who later entered *bhakti-mārga*? Never. Any discerning person can never accept this.

After Śrīman Mahāprabhu, His *līlā-parikaras* (eternal pastime associates) such as the six Gosvāmīs, Śrī Lokanātha and Bhūgarbha, and later Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Śrī Narottama Thākura and Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura were naturally *niṣkiñcana paramahaṁsa vaiṣṇavas*. There was no need for them to wear *sannyāsa-veśa* or saffron cloth. Secondly, Śrīman Mahāprabhu had performed the *līlā* of wearing *sannyāsa-veśa* and saffron cloth. Thus considering themselves to be worthless, lowly and unqualified, these *mahātmās* did not wear *sannyāsa-veśa* and saffron cloth in order to show honour and respect to the *veśa* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and also to maintain their own identities as servants under the shelter of His lotus feet. On the other hand, in order to express veneration for the *niṣkiñcana paramahaṁsa-veśa* of the associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and, under their guidance, to preach His message throughout the entire world, many *akiñcana vaiṣṇavas* on the path of *rāgānuga-bhajana*, holding the *paramahaṁsa-veśa* upon their heads, have accepted a position below

their worshipable superiors by wearing the *veśa* and saffron cloth of the *sannyāsa āśrama* which is included within the system of *varṇāśrama dharma*. These two customs, each having their own place, are both exquisitely beautiful and also completely in accordance with *siddhānta*. Today *śuddha hari-bhakti* has been, is being and will continue to be, preached and spread throughout the world by these *mahāpuruṣa*, great perfected saints, who wear this second type of *niṣkiñcana sannyāsa-veśa*. The names of some of these *mahāpuruṣa sannyāsīs* of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya are as follows:

1) Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī:

Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī was the *guru* and paternal uncle of Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. He was a recipient of the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In addition to being a greatly learned scholar and a natural poet, he was also fully absorbed in *bhajana*.

2) Śrī Viśvarūpa Prabhu:

Śrī Viśvarūpa was the elder brother of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. After accepting *sannyāsa* his name was Śrī Śaṅkarāraṇya. He never had any connection with *advaitavāda*. He was a devotee from the very beginning of his life.

3) Śrī Rādhikānāth Gosvāmī:

Śrī Rādhikānāth Gosvāmī was a greatly learned scholar and *tattva-vid vaiṣṇava-ācārya* who appeared amongst the Gauḍīya *vaiṣṇavas* of the Śrī Advaita-vaṁśa. He was a *sannyāsī* residing in Vrndāvana and he used to wear saffron cloth and carry a *tridaṇḍa*. He has quoted numerous statements of scriptural evidence on the subject of *sannyāsa*, eligibility for *sannyāsa*, its necessity and regulations in his text entitled 'Yati Darpaṇa'.

4) Śrī Gauragovindānanda:

Śrī Gauragovindānanda was a disciple of Śrī Paramānanda Purī. His academic prowess was unrivaled during his time. He was immersed in single-pointed *bhajana* and his life's breath was Śrī Gaurasundara. His *sannyāsa* name was Parivrājakācārya Śrī Gaura-Govindānanda (Purī) Bhāgavata Svāmī. A *vyavasthā-patra* (certified document) written by

him in Sanskrit verses to show that the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is in the line of Śrī Madhva is especially famous.

5) Śrī Gaura-gopāla Gosvāmī:

Śrī Gaura-gopāla Gosvāmī was a resident of Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa and a celebrated scholar of the Advaita-vaṁśa. He also accepted *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa*. His *sannyāsa* name was “Śrī Guru-Gauravānanda Mahārāja”.

6) Śrī Sārvabhauma Madhusūdana Gosvāmī:

The renowned and supremely erudite Śrī Sārvabhauma Madhūsudana Gosvāmī, one of the famous Gosvāmīs of Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma, also accepted *sannyāsa* and saffron cloth.

7) Śrī Bālakṛṣṇa Gosvāmī:

Śrī Bālakṛṣṇa Gosvāmī was one of the Gosvāmīs of Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa in Vṛndāvana. He accepted *tridaṇḍa* and *veśa* from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Gosvāmī.

9) Śrī Atula Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī:

Śrī Atula Kṛṣṇa Gosvāmī, whose life and soul is Śrī Gaurasundara, is an eminent scholar and exceedingly famous Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam commentator among the Gosvāmīs of Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa in Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana. He has accepted *sannyāsa-veśa* from Śrī Vidyāmānya Tīrtha, the leader of the *vaiṣṇava* community at the headquarters of the Śrī Madhvācārya Sampradāya in Uḍupī. Nevertheless, he has maintained the same *tilaka*, *mantra*, *bhajana-praṇālī* and devotion to Śrīman Mahāprabhu of his Gauḍīya paramparā as he had done prior to his accepting *sannyāsa*. His *sannyāsa* name is “Śrī Caitanya Kṛṣṇāśraya Tīrtha Mahārāja”. He is currently preaching the message of Śrī Gaurasundara throughout India.

10) Jagadguru Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī:

Śrī Vimalā Prasāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura preached throughout the entire world that specific *harināma* and *suddha-bhakti* which fulfills the innermost heart's desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He is also the founder

of the Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭhas in every state and country. After accepting *sannyāsa*, he was celebrated by the name of Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī “Prabhupāda”. Out of humility, he used to introduce himself as “Śrī Vārṣabhānavī Dayita Dāsa”.

Hundreds of immensely talented and learned *sannyāsa* disciples and grand-disciples of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, being absorbed in *bhajana* and dedicated to the service of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga, have preached and spread the message of Śrī Gaura throughout India and all countries, large and small, throughout the entire world. This powerful propagation is also going on today. Among them, names such as Paramārādhyā Parivrājakācārya Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Māhārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Bhūdeva Srautī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja (the famous preacher of the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu throughout the Western countries) and Parivrājakācārya Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja are especially worthy of a mention. By the great endeavours and service of these *mahāpurusas*, many journals and authentic scriptures such as Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Gītā and Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta are being published in Indian languages such as Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, Oṛiyā, Āsāmī, Gujarātī, Tamīl and Telugu and also in the languages of major nations such as English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian and Japanese. This invaluable literature is now available in about 40 or 50 prominent languages of the world, including the various languages of major continents such as South America and Africa. Vast temples of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Sītā-Rāma and Śrī Jagannāthadeva have been constructed and are being constructed everywhere. Abandoning all sectarianism in regard to caste and creed, thousands of faithful ladies and gentlemen with *karatāla* and *mṛdaṅga* are loudly chanting “Hari bol! Hari bol!” and finding exhilaration in *saṅkīrtana*. Are Hakīmji and his *śikṣa-guruvarga* not committing *mahā-vaiṣṇava aparādha* by claiming that these brilliant, supremely learned, *parama niṣkīñcana tridaṇḍi sannyāsīs* and

brahmacārīs attired in saffron cloth, whose entire lives are dedicated to Śrī Gaurasundara, are acting independently according to their own desire and that they not following in the footsteps of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavācārya Gosvāmīs? Then why in his own “*smārikā*” (commemorative publication) has he shown the names and pictures of these very *mahāvaiṣṇava ācāryas* and described them in writing as Śrī Brahma-Mādhva Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* or Śrīman Mādhva-Gauḍeśvarācāryas? Thus the validity of *sannyāsa* and saffron cloth in the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, both before and after the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, has been established herein.

Objection 3b:

Until the very end of their lives Śrī Gauḍīya vaiṣṇavas such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana kept the same names by which they were known before renouncing their homes.

Refutation 3b:

As far as the matter of keeping their previous names and *veśa* until the end of their lives is concerned, this idea of Hakīmī is also completely misguided. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu’s previous name was ‘Kuvera’. ‘Nityānanda’ is his *sannyāsa* name. Śrī Advaita Ācārya’s previous name was Kamalākṣa or Kamalākānta. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī’s previous name was ‘Amara’. The name given to him by Gauḍeśvara Hussein śhāh was ‘Sākara Mallik’ and the name given by Śrīman Mahāprabhu was ‘Śrī Sanātana’. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s previous name was ‘Santoṣa’. The name given to him by Hussein śhāh was ‘Dabīr Khāsa’ and the name given by Śrīman Mahāprabhu was ‘Śrī Rūpa’. When Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura accepted *veśa* his name became ‘Śrī Hari Vallabha Dāsa’.

According to ‘*Samśkāra Dīpikā*’, written by Śrī Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, the rule of accepting a name indicating servitude to Bhagavān is included in the rites for taking shelter of *tridaṇḍa sannyāsa-veśa*. Even the custom of *veśa* employed at a later time is one type of *sannyāsa*, because there is no need of *vidhi* (regulations) to govern the behaviour of *niṣkiñcana paramahamsas*. There is no question of them being controlled by the goad of scriptural injunctions. It is also customary to

accept a name indicating servitude to Bhagavān at the time of taking shelter of this *veśa*. For example, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja (previously Vātakṛṣṇa) and Śrīla Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja (previously Vamśīdāsa) to name but a few. There is evidence of thousands of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas changing their previous names. Thus this opinion of Hakīmji is also simply childish ranting.

Refutation 3c: Among those who had taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, not all were *niṣkiñcana paramahansa gosvāmīs* and not all were indifferent to the *varṇāśrama* system. There were *mahāpuruṣas* in all categories; *brahmacārīs* such as Śrī Nakula Brahmācārī and Śrī Pradyumna Brahmācārī, *gṛhastha* devotees such as Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Śrī Śivānanda Sena and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, *sannyāsīs* such as Śrī Paramānanda Purī, Śrī Raṅga Purī and Brahmānanda Bhāratī, and prominent *niṣkiñcana mahābhāgavatas* such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. However, there was not even a trace of attachment or identification with *varṇāśrama* or *veśa* in any of them. Their acceptance of *varṇāśrama* or *veśa* was wholly and solely to provide a favourable situation for their *bhājana*. Therefore the idea that those who have accepted *sannyāsa veśa* have no eligibility for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *rāgānugā bhājana* is contrary to Gauḍīya *siddhānta*.

Objection 4) After delivering Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, alluding to Himself through the words of Śrī Sārvabhauma, expounded the conclusion that *sannyāsa* is unnecessary, detrimental and above all opposed to *bhakti-dharma*.

(Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata 3.3.30)

Refutation 4) In Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata there is a description of a conversation about *sannyāsa* between Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and Śrīman Mahāprabhu which takes place prior to the deliverance of Śrī Sārvabhaumajī. Śrī Hakīmji has deliberately hidden this incident from the readers. This incident is mentioned in Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata as follows:

nā jāniyā sārvabhauma īśvarera marma

*kaḥite lāgilā ye jīvera yata dharma
param subuddhi tumī haiyā āpane
tabe tumī sannyāsa karilā ki kārṇe*

*bujha dekhi vicāriyā ki āche sannyāse
prathameī baddha haya ahaṅkāra-pāśe*

*daṇḍa dhari mahājñāna haya āpanāre
kāhāreo bal joḍa ista nāhi kare*

*yāra padadhūli laite vadera vihita
hena jana namaskare, tabu nahe bhīta*

(Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Ādi 3/18-22)

Being quite ignorant of *bhakti* and *bhakti-tattva*, Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya considered Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who is directly Vrajendranandana Kṛṣṇa, adorned with the sentiment and complexion of Śrī Rādhā, to be an ordinary *śaṅkarite sannyāsī* of tender years. With this idea in mind, he began to behave as if he were imparting instructions to an ignorant *jīva*. He said to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, “You are the recipient of Kṛṣṇa’s great mercy. You also seem to be highly intelligent. So why have you accepted *sannyāsa*? Just consider for a moment, what is the value of *sannyāsa*? As soon as he carries a *daṇḍa*, the *jīva* thinks of himself as a great *jñānī* and becomes bound up in the ropes of false ego. He can never politely join his palms and speak to anyone with great humility. The Vedas decree that one should accept the foot dust of one’s *gurujana* (superiors). Yet the *sannyāsī* is not even afraid of committing *aparādha* on seeing such *gurujana* offering their obeisances to him. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam we find the injunction to offer *praṇāma* to all living entities:

*viṣṭjya smayamānān svān
dṛṣaṁ vrīḍāṁ ca daihikīm
praṇamed daṇḍa-vad bhūmāv
ā-śva-cāṇḍāla-go-kharam*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.29.16)

*manasaitāni bhūtāni
praṇamed bahū-mānayan
īśvaro jīva-kalayā
praviṣṭo bhagavān iti*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.29.34)”

Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya continued:

“Bhagavān is also present within the hearts of the *jīvas* in the form of the *antaryāmī*, *paramātmā*. Understanding this, one should offer *sāṣṭāṅga daṇḍavat praṇāma* to all *jīvas*, including dogs, dog-eaters, cows and asses. However, a *sannyāsī* rejects his sacred thread and *śikhā*, gives up *bhagavat-bhajana*, calls himself Nārāyaṇa and accepts obeisances even from personalities who are worthy of worship.”

Śrīman Mahāprabhu very humbly replied, “Do not consider Me to be a *sannyāsī*. I have abandoned My home and given up My *śikhā* and sacred thread only for the sake of dedicating Myself exclusively to *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Understanding Me to be afflicted by separation from Kṛṣṇa, mercifully bless me so that I may meet My beloved Kṛṣṇa.”

On another occasion Śrīman Mahāprabhuji spoke as follows:

*prabhu kahe, sādhu eī bhikṣura vacana
mukunda-sevana vrata kaila nirdhāraṇa*

*parātmā-niṣṭhā-mātra veśa-dhāraṇa
mukunda-sevāya haya saṁsāra-tāraṇa*

*seī veśa kaila, ebe vṛndāvana giyā
kṛṣṇa-niṣevana kari nibhṛte vasiyā*

“The statement of the *tridaṇḍī bhikṣuka* is true and beneficial because he has made a determined vow to engage in the service of the lotus feet of Śrī Mukunda. The purport of *sannyāsa-veśa* is that by being fixed in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the supreme soul and the cause of all causes, one can give up all material misidentification. When such *niṣṭhā*

arises, one can attain the service of Bhagavān Śrī Mukunda and very easily cross over the ocean of birth and death. Having accepted *sannyāsa*, now I will go to Vṛndāvana and, while remaining in a solitary place, far from the tumult of the mundane world, I will serve the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 3.7, 8, 9)

After accepting *sannyāsa*, although Śrīman Mahāprabhuḥ set off for Vṛndāvana, He ended up in Śrī Jagannātha Purī. It was there that He met with Śrī Sārvabhauma. At that time Sārvabhaumajī gave Him the aforementioned instructions defining the defects of *sannyāsa*. However, after hearing Śrīman Mahāprabhu's explanation of the 'ātmārāmaśca' verse and after having *darśana* of His *ṣaḍ-bhuja* form, Śrī Sārvabhauma's illusion was dispelled. Then he began to honour all of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *grhastha* and *sannyāsī* associates.

In all the scriptures such as *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata* and *Śrī Caitanya Candrāmṛta*, one will find a mood of veneration towards the *sannyāsa āśrama*.

Śrī Sārvabhauma has stated:

*sahajeī pūjya tumi are ta' sannyāsa
ataeva hauñ tomāra āmi nija-dāsa*

“You are naturally respectable and in addition to this you are also a *sannyāsī*. Therefore I have become your servant.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 6.56)

As far as the matter of accepting *praṇāmas* and considering oneself to be Nārāyaṇa is concerned, such behaviour is totally opposed to *vaiṣṇava-sannyāsa*. In Yājñavalkyopaniṣad the injunction has been given that all *sannyāsīs* should offer *sāṣṭāṅga praṇāma* to all living entities from outcaste dog-eaters to cows, asses, birds and beasts

*īśvaro jīva kalayā praviṣṭo bhagavāniti
praṇamed daṇḍavad bhamāvāśva cāṇḍāla gokharam*
(Yājñavalkyopaniṣad, mantra 4)

In 'Saṁskara Dīpikā', written by Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, it is clearly explained that the *sannyāsa-mantra* is the *mantra* for attaining "gopī-bhāva". In this type of *sannyāsa* the *śikhā* and sacred thread are not discarded. *Sannyāsa-veśa* is only accepted externally for the purpose of engaging in one-pointed *bhajana* to the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. While internally following the moods of the gopīs of Vraja, one externally remains in the *ānugatya* (guidance) of the associates of Śrī Gaurasundara. Therefore this *sannyāsa* is never opposed to *rāgānugā-bhajana*. Another point worthy of our consideration is that if we accept all the *bābājīs* who have received *veśa* to be genuine *parama-bhāgavata vaiṣṇavas*, completely devoid of false ego and the propensity to criticize others, as suggested by their dress, then it would never be possible for them to have hatred and jealousy toward those who have accepted *sannyāsa* and saffron cloth and who are engaged in the *bhajana* of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Rādhā-Govinda exclusively in the *ānugatya* of the Gauḍīya Gosvāmīs. If anyone accepts *veśa*, yet, proudly thinking himself to be in the *paramahamṣa* stage, sees other practitioners of unalloyed *bhajana* with contempt and considers them to be out of line, then how can he be considered a *paramahamṣa* or *rāgānuga-vaiṣṇava*? *Anarthas* do not go away simply by putting on *bābājī-veśa*. Alternatively, it is certainly meritorious for unqualified *sādhakas* to remain in the system of *varṇāśrama* and engage in *bhajana*, while simultaneously giving up pride and attachment to both *varṇa* and *āśrama*. When one is qualified, one will automatically become indifferent to the regulations of *varṇāśrama* and enter into *rāgānuga-bhajana*. Otherwise, if unqualified persons imitate the fully impartial *paramahamṣa vaiṣṇavas* then the opposite result will be unavoidable.

Objection 5) Śrīman Mahāprabhuḥ never instructed anyone to accept *sannyāsa*. Rather He has given the instruction to renounce the system of *varṇāśrama*: *eta saba chāḍi āra varṇāśrama dharma, akiñcana hañā laya kṛṣṇaika śaraṇa*: "Without hesitation, one should take exclusive shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with full confidence, giving up all bad association and even neglecting the regulative principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*." (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta 2.22.93)

Refutation 5) In this verse Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is giving

instructions on *abhidheya-tattva*, how to attain the ultimate objective, *kṛṣṇa-prema*, which are meant for highly detached *niṣkīñcana vaiṣṇavas* like Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī. To illustrate and confirm this fact, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has then given the example of Haridāsa-Śreṣṭha Uddhavajī:

*vijñā janera haya yadi kṛṣṇa-guṇa-jñāna
anya tyajī bhaje, tāte uddhava-pramāṇa*

“Whenever an experienced person develops real knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental qualities, he naturally gives up all other engagements to perform *bhajana*. Śrī Uddhava is evidence of this.”
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.97)

Thus such an instruction is not for ignorant or unqualified persons who are seized by *anarthas* such as a hankering for wealth, women and prestige. One should understand that this instruction is for learned persons who have realized the *tattva* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s name, form, qualities and pastimes. This fact is clarified by the use of the word “*yadi*” (if) in this verse (Madhya-līlā 22.97). Therefore it is not the duty of experienced persons to catch one word and just stop there. Rather, it is necessary first of all to consider when, to whom and in what circumstance has a particular regulation or prohibition been spoken. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given different types of instructions in various circumstances as illustrated by the following examples:

a) Instructions to the young Raghunātha Dāsa (Gosvāmī):

*sthira haiñā ghare jāo nā hao bātūla
krame-krame pāya loka bhava-sindhu kūla*

“Be patient and return to your home. Don’t be a crazy fellow. By and by you will be able to cross the ocean of material existence.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 16.237)

*markaṭa vairāgya nā kara loka dekhāñā
yathāyogya viṣaya bhuñja anāsakta haiñā*

“Do not be renounced like a monkey just to show off to the common people. For the time being, enjoy the material world in an appropriate way, but do not be attached to it.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 16.238)

*antare niṣṭhā kara bāhye loka vyavahāra
acirāte kṛṣṇa tomāya karibena uddhāra*

“You should cultivate *niṣṭhā*, (resolute dedication to bhajana and bhajanīya, Kṛṣṇa) within your heart, but externally you may behave like an ordinary man. Thus Kṛṣṇa will soon become very pleased and deliver you from the clutches of *māyā*.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 16. 239)

(b) Instructions to Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa:

*vrddha mātā-pitāra jāi karaha sevana
vaiṣṇava-pāsa bhāgavat kara adhyayana*

“When you return to your home, you should serve your elderly father and mother, who are devotees. Furthermore, you should study Śrīmad Bhāgavatam under the guidance of a realized vaiṣṇava.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 13.113)

(c) Instructions to Śrī Śivānanda Sena:

*grhaṣṭha hayena inho cāhie sañcaya
sañcaya nā kaile kuṭumba bharaṇa nāhi haya*

“Being a householder, Vāsudeva Datta needs to save money. However, because he is not doing so, it is very difficult for him to maintain his family.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 15.95)

(d) After accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed the residents of Nadiyā in Śāntipura:

ghare jāiyā kara sadā kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa nāma, kṛṣṇa kathā, kṛṣṇa ārādhana

“Return to your homes. Perform *kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana*, chant the names of Kṛṣṇa, discuss Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and worship Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 3.190)

ghare giyā kara sabe kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana
punarapi āmā saṅge haibe milana

“On returning to your homes, you should all perform *kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana*. I assure you that we will meet again.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 3.207)

(c) To Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda:

kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śudra kene naya
jeī kṛṣṇa tattva-vettā sei guru haya

“Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī* or a *śudra*, one who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva* is a *guru*.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.128)

(g) Before appearing in this world, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu made the following vow:

āpani karimu bhaktibhāva aṅgikāre
āpani ācari bhakti śikhāimu sabāre

“I shall accept the mood of a devotee and I shall teach *bhakti* by practising it Myself.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.20)

āpane nā kaile dharma śikhāna na jāya
ei ta siddhānta gītā-bhāgavate gāya

“Unless one personally practises *bhakti*, he cannot teach it to others.

This conclusion is indeed confirmed throughout the Gītā and Bhāgavatam.” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.29)

Furthermore:

*eī mata bhaktabhāva kari aṅgikāra
āpani ācari bhakti karila pracāra*

“In this way, assuming the sentiment of a devotee, He preached *bhakti* while practising it Himself.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.41)

By analyzing these varied instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we can clearly see that *brahmacārīs*, *grhaṣṭha-bhaktas*, those who have accepted *veśa* and *paramahंसas* who are indifferent to *varṇāśrama*, are all eligible to perform *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. Those who are absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* are all worthy of the utmost respect. If a *grhaṣṭha-vaiṣṇava* is worthy of veneration, then how can a *sannyāsi-vaiṣṇava*, who has renounced everything to be exclusively dedicated in *aikāntika-bhajana*, be considered despicable, unprincipled and fit to be neglected?

If *sādhakas* in the *grhaṣṭhāśrama*, *sannyāsāśrama* or those who have accepted *veśa*, are desirous of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, they should engage in *bhajana* while remaining in whichever *āśrama* they find to be favourable for the practice of their *sādhana* to attain that *prema*. Whatever is unfavourable should be rejected. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained the reason for His accepting *sannyāsa* to Śrī Advaita Ācārya Prabhu in the following way:

*binā sarva tyāgan bhajanam na hyasupate
riti tyāgo ‘smābhiḥ kṛta iha kimadvaitakathayā
āyam daṇḍo bhūyān prabalataraso mānasapaśo
ritivāham daṇḍagrahaṇamaviśeṣādakaravam*

(Caitanyacandrodaya Nāṭaka 5.22)

“Without renouncing everything it is not possible to engage in the *bhajana* of the Lord of one’s heart. Therefore I have renounced

everything. I am not a renunciant like the *advaitavādīs* or *nirviśeṣa-jñānīs* who hanker for liberation. I have adopted the practice of carrying the *sannyāsa-daṇḍa* especially to give punishment (*daṇḍa*) to the excessively restless animal of my mind." Can anyone find anything objectionable in such *sannyāsa*?

Some say Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa-līlā* is only in connection with His own transcendental form and is thus applicable only to Him. However His *sannyāsa-līlā* is also for the benefit and instruction of the *jīvas*:

āpanī ācari bhakti sikhāimu sabāre

"I will teach *bhakti* by practising it Myself."

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 3.20)

In the verse "*nāham vipro*" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 13.80) Śrīman Mahāprabhu has given instructions regarding the pure *svarūpa* of the *jīva*. The purport is that the *bhakti-sādhaka* should not keep himself bound in any gross or subtle mundane designations. Rather he should understand himself to be a purely transcendental servant of Kṛṣṇa. Is it that the self-conception of being a *sannyāsī* inevitably arises in those who accept *sannyāsa* whereas there is no possibility of mundane misidentification for *grhastas* and those who have accepted *veśa*? This seems to be the opinion of Hakīmjī. Actually *sannyāsa* is the arrangement to give up all attachment and self-identification with the system of *varṇāśrama* even while remaining within it. Thus it is highly desirable to relinquish identification with externals and engage in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* with a fixed determination to serve His lotus feet.

Objection 6) Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has said that it is forbidden for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas to wear saffron cloth:

raktavastra vaiṣṇavera parite nā juyāya

"This red cloth is unfit for a *vaiṣṇava* to wear."

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya līlā 13.61)

Refutation 6) Now the actual context of this statement is being presented before the readers so that the subject may be clarified. Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍitājī, an associate of Śrī Gaurasundara, was staying in the *bhajanakuṭī* of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī with the intention of having *darśana* of Gokula. One day Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī returned from performing *madhukarī bhikṣā* (begging alms door to door) wearing a red cloth tied around his head. When Paṇḍitājī saw this cloth, at first he was very pleased, thinking that it was a remnant of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. But later when he realized that this cloth was from an *advaitavādī sannyāsī*, he became furious. Nevertheless Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī very humbly replied, “I was wearing this cloth only because I had the desire to see your exclusive dedication to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Your *gaura-niṣṭhā* is glorious. Now I have no need of this. I will throw it away.”

raktavastra vaiṣṇavera parite nā yuyāya

“This red cloth is unfit for a *vaiṣṇava* to wear.”

Here Paṇḍitājī’s anger was not caused by the sight of saffron cloth. It was caused by Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī’s wearing the cloth of an *advaitavādī sannyāsī* as evidenced by the following statement:

rātula vastra dekhi, paṇḍita premāviṣṭa hailā

“On seeing the red cloth, Jagadānanda Paṇḍita was overwhelmed with ecstatic love.” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya 13.52)

If he was irritated only by reddish cloth then he would also become angry on seeing the cloth of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Paramānanda Purī and others. However, there is no account of such a situation to be found anywhere else. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī had worn red cloth only to show the proper etiquette in regard to Mahāprabhu’s *veśa* and to pacify Paṇḍitājī. *Rakta* (red) cloth is forbidden for *vaiṣṇavas*. If it was the intention of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī to exclusively prohibit the wearing of saffron cloth, then he would have also forbidden *sannyāsa* in his own commentary

on Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has presented the point of view of Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas on the subject of *sannyāsa* by citing and explaining verse 3.5.39 of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in his own commentary on verse 2.7.14 of Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta:

'ayamarthaḥ: -yatayo 'pi yasya padāravindasya mūlam talam keta āśrayo yeṣāṁ tathābhūtā eva santaḥ mahadapi saṁsāra duḥkhamañjasā anāyāsenaiva bahirūtkṣipantīti yadvā, ye śrībhagaccaraṇāravindāśrayāste yataya eva nocyante, kintu paramabhaktā eva, sarvaparitūyāgena taccaraṇāravindāśrayaṇāt, kevalam grhādiparitūyāganiṣṭhārthameva sannyāsa-grahaṇāt, veśamātreṇa yatīsādrśyam teṣāṁ. ye tu ātmānameva śrībhagavantam śrīnārāyaṇam manvānā ātmavyতিরিক্তদৃষ্টam śrutam sarvameva manmayākālpitam mayyevādhyastamityādi māyāvadānusāreṇādvaita bodhamātraparāsta evādvaitaparavedānta-siddhāntamate yatayo 'bhidhīyate ta eva hi sacchabdavācebhyaḥ bhaktebhyaḥ bhinnā akṣīṇapāpā viṣayarāgavāsītāntaḥ karaṇā ajñā api paṇḍitamānino daityaprakṛtayaḥ tān pratyeve māni vacanāni śrūyante

“The demigods said, “O Lord! We pray to your lotus feet. They are like an umbrella for repelling all the sufferings of the *jīvas* who have surrendered unto them. On taking shelter of these lotus feet the *sannyāsīs* easily cast far away the endless miseries of material existence. The conditioned souls of the world taste the threefold miseries and they are incapable of acquiring proper knowledge because they have not taken shelter of Your lotus feet. Bhagavān! We will also take shelter in the shade of those lotus feet and obtain knowledge.”

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī comments further:

“*Sannyāsīs* take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān and easily cast off the unlimited miseries of this cycle of birth and death. However those who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Bhagavān are never called *sannyāsīs*. Although they externally wear *sannyāsa-veśa* they are called *bhaktas*. So here the word ‘*yati*’ (*sannyāsī*) is used to indicate those *bhaktas* because they have renounced everything to take shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. In other words they accept *sannyāsa* by giving up hearth, home and everything only for the purpose of

accomplishing steadfastness in their dedication to the service of Bhagavān (parātmanisthā).

“They only appear to be *sannyāsīs* by their outward dress, but actually they are *bhaktas*. However, those who consider themselves to be Śrī Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa are absorbed in monistic conceptions in accordance with the *māyāvādī* point of view. They entertain ideas such as, ‘All substances are situated within me. Although they are seeing, hearing and moving, they have no soul because they are simply imagined by my *māyā*.’ Those who maintain such conceptions are called “*yatī*” by the adherents of *advaitavāda vedānta-siddhānta*. Furthermore, they are different from those who are referred to by the word “*sat*” in the aforementioned verse. They are also possessed of a deep attachment for unabated, sinful sense gratification, yet they consider themselves to be greatly learned scholars. Therefore this statement is referring to such *yatīs* who are possessed of a demonic nature.”

This conclusion of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has also been established in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta and Śrī Caitanya Candrodaya. It is also Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s internal mood. Thus Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī is not an opponent but rather an advocate of saffron cloth. Śrī Hakīmji was unable to distinguish between *gairika-vastra* (saffron cloth) and *rakta-vastra* (red cloth). *Gairika-vastra* signifies *anurāga* for Kṛṣṇa whereas *rakta-vastra* is a symbol of envy. This should not be worn by *vaiṣṇavas*.

Objection 7) *Sannyāsa* is not mentioned anywhere among the sixty-four limbs of *sādhana-bhakti*.

Refutation 7) This argument is extremely ridiculous. Although *sannyāsa* is not mentioned anywhere among the sixty-four limbs of *sādhana-bhakti*, neither is there the slightest mention of entering the *gṛhastha āśrama*, accepting *veśa* or wearing white cloth among the limbs of *sādhana-bhakti*. So will Hakīmji consider that these activities are also forbidden for Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas? What to speak of Śrī Hakīmji’s own activities such as running a printing press and a book shop. Since these activities are also not mentioned within the sixty-four limbs of *sādhana-*

bhakti then Śrī Hakīmjī himself, by his own definition, must also be unprincipled and outside of the *ānugatya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. What mountainous intelligence! *Gṛhastha*, *sannyāsa* or even *veśa* are not limbs of *bhakti*. They are the outer appearance of *sādhana-bhakti* which can be accepted if they are favourable or rejected if they are unfavourable. Thus, although *sannyāsa* is not mentioned within the sixty-four limbs of *sādhana-bhakti*, it cannot be considered forbidden. ‘*Rāgānugā*’ is also not mentioned within the limbs of *vaidhi*, so should it be forbidden? This objection is simply irrelevant and dry logic.

Objection 8) At the beginning of the 18th chapter of the eleventh canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, in stating the essence of the chapter, has explained that there is no necessity of any *āśrama* for *bhaktas* by the phrase ‘*bhaktasyānāśrayamitvañca*’.

Refutation 8) Whatever has been elaborately described by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his commentary on the verse 11.18.28 of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is now being presented before the readers.

*jñānaniṣṭho virakto vā madbhakto vānapekṣakaḥ
saliṅgānāśramānṣtyaktvā caredavidhigocaraḥ*

Commentary by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura:

*paripakvajñānino niṣkāmasvabhaktasya ca varṇāśraman-
inayamamābhāvamāha, -jñānaniṣṭhaḥ paripakva-jñānavān
anapekṣakaḥ pratiṣṭhāparyantāpekṣārahitaḥ atra sarvathā
nairapekṣamajātapremno bhaktasya na sammavedata utpannapremaiva
bhaktaḥ saliṅgānāśramānṣtyajet anutpannapremā tu
nirliṅgāśramadharmānṣtyajedyartho labhyate; svadharmatyāgastu
“tāvat karmāṇi kurvīte” vākyāt bhaktānāmārambhata evāvagamya
tayoh śuddhāntaḥkaraṇatvādeva pāpe pravṛttyabhāvāt durācāratvaṁ
nāśaṅkyam; tenāvidhigocaraḥ*

“*Bhaktas* who are completely devoid of material desires renounce *āśrama dharma* along with its concomitant external signs and behave as *paramahansa*s who are not subject to the regulations of the Vedas. *Premī-bhaktas* are completely impartial and desireless in regard to the

material world. As long as *prema* has not awakened, one cannot be completely impartial. Therefore, as long as *prema* has not manifested in the heart of the *sādhaka-bhakta*, he must engage in *hari-bhajana* without renouncing the system of *saṅga āśrama-dharma*, that is *āśrama-dharma* which is characterized by the appropriate external paraphernalia. He should renounce *nirliṅga āśrama-dharma* or that *āśrama-dharma* which is not characterized by the external symbols of recognition. In other words, disregarding the *nirliṅga-āśrama-dharma* which is not characterized by the appropriate paraphernalia such as the *tridaṇḍa* and saffron cloth, one must engage in *bhajana*. Although the appropriate activities of *varṇāśrama* are not necessary for the impartial *bhaktas*, as long as devotees are not completely indifferent to material life, i.e. as long as they have not attained *prema*, they will remain absorbed in *bhajana-sādhana* while wearing the symbols which are appropriate for their *āśrama* such as the *tridaṇḍa* and saffron cloth.”

Premī bhaktas, who are completely free from all material expectations, also dress appropriately according to the *āśrama* system for the benefit of the common people. *Sādhaka-bhaktas* will also continue to wear the appropriate attire with a mood of detachment. Otherwise, inauspiciousness will ensue due to transgressing the orders of *śāstra* and the *mahājānas*.

By their critical analysis of the *tridaṇḍa* and saffron cloth the *sahajiyā* group who are simply dependent on material reasoning, reveal their own ignorance on the subject of *śāstra* and invite *vaiṣṇava aparādha* for no reason. If saffron cloth is so impure or forbidden for *vaiṣṇavas* then why is it that since the time of the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, great, eminent *ṛṣis* and *maharṣis* who have the power to see past, present and future and also in Kali-yuga highly devoted *vaiṣṇavācāryas* who were endowed with divine brilliance and a far-reaching vision of all *śāstra*, such as Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Madhvācārya, all wore saffron cloth? In Śrī Gopāla campū (pūrvacampū 3.64) it is stated that Śrī Paurṇamāsī devī also wears saffron cloth. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has also written in his Vidagdha Mādhava Nāṭaka that Śrī Paurṇamāsī devī wears saffron (*kāṣāya*) cloth.

vahantī kāṣāyāmbaramurasi sāndīpanimuneḥ

(Śrī Vidagdha Mādhava 1.18)

And also,

paurṇamāsī bhagavatī sarvasiddhi vidhāyanī

kāṣāyavasānā gaurī kāśakeśīdarāyatā

(Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśadīpikā, śloka 66)

Quoting a verse from Harivaṁśa, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written that all the princesses who were imprisoned by Narakāśura had fasted and put on saffron cloth as part of a *vrata* to attain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

sarvāḥ kāṣāyavāsinyāḥ sarvāśca niyatendriyāḥ

vratopavāsataṭṭvajñāḥ kāṅkṣantyaḥ kṛṣṇa-darśanam

(Śrī Gopāla Campu, Uttar Vibhāga 18.50 -

quoted from Harivaṁśa)

In Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata there is a description of the *sannyāsa veśa* of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Nāmācārya Haridāsa Ṭhākura -

ājñā śire kari' nityānanda - haridāsa

tataḥṣaṇe calilena pathe āsi hāsa

dohāna sannyāsiveśa - yāna yāra ghare

āthevyathe āsi' bhikṣā - nimantraṇa kare

"Taking the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu upon their heads, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura immediately set out, laughing together in a joyful mood. Wherever they went to beg alms in the form of the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, householders would extend invitations to them because they were both wearing *sannyāsa-veśa*."

(Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata Madhya 13.15, 19)

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Śrīman Mahāprabhu personally explained the glories of *sannyāsa* while giving consolation to His parents.

*śuni; śacī-miśrera duḥkhī haila mana
tabe prabhu mātā-pitāra kaila āśvāsana*

*bhāla haila, - viśvarūpa sannyāsa karila
pitṛ-kula, matṛ-kula, - duī uddhārila*

“When Śacīmātā and Jagannātha Miśra heard of the departure of their elder son, Viśvarūpa, they were very unhappy. To console them Mahāprabhu said, ‘My dear mother and father, it is very good that Viśvarūpa has accepted *sannyāsa*. By doing so he has delivered the dynasties of both his father and mother.’”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 15.13, 14)

In the 19th *vilāsa* of the scripture ‘Prema-vilāsa’, there is a description of the *sannyāsa* of Śrī Mādhava Ācārya, the author of the text entitled ‘Śrī Kṛṣṇa Maṅgala’:

*sannyāsa kariyā tiñha rahi vṛndāvana
vrajera madhura bhāve karaye bhajana*

*mādhava ācārya śrī mādhavī sakhī hana
śrī rūpera kṛpāya tāra haila uddīpana*

“After accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrī Mādhava Ācārya lived in Vṛndāvana and performed *bhajana* in the parakīya bhāva of Vraja. Śrī Mādhava Ācārya was inspired by the mercy of Śrī Rūpa. In Vraja-līla he is Śrī Mādhavī Sakhī.”
(Prema-Vilāsa, 19th vilāsa)

From this incident described in Prema-Vilāsa we can see that the *gosvāmī-varga* headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī were not against *sannyāsa* in any way. We also see from this that the custom of *sannyāsa* is also practised among Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. Furthermore, it is also established by this example that a *sannyāsī* is eligible to engage in *bhajana* following in the wake of the *vraja-gopīs*.

Thus it is not forbidden and it is not outside of the *ānugātya* of the

Gauḍīya Gosvāmīs for Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, who are practising devotees, dedicated to *bhajana* and who have renounced their homes, to accept *tridaṇḍa sannyāsa* and saffron cloth. However, it is illegal and contrary to *śāstra* for unqualified persons to imitate the *veśa* of a *niṣkiṅcana-paramahansa*.



In the middle Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, to the left Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Muni Mahārāja (Śrī Sanātana Prabhu), and to the right Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja (Śrī Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu)

Pañcarātriḱa & Bhāgavata Guru-paramparā

Nowadays, people are concocting newer and newer doubts about *śrī guru-paramparā* in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. Some people believe that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was initiated in the Madhva Sampradāya and that he was not actually a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava. They assert that, although he had the association of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the influence of the Madhva Sampradāya was so strong that in his own writings he stubbornly included Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya as part of the Madhva Sampradāya. They claim that there is no reasonable justification for this, and that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa can therefore not be accepted as an *ācārya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya.

Another group of ignorant people say that Jagadguru Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupādājī created a completely new concept which he called the *bhāgavata-paramparā*. According to them, he has explained in this supposedly new doctrine of *bhāgavata-paramparā* that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura is a disciple of Vaiṣṇava Sarvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha dasa Bābājī Mahārāja, and that Śrī Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura. Some *sahajiyā* Vaiṣṇavas also present the doubt that

Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's *guru-paramparā* cannot be considered bona fide because he accepted the renounced order (*sannyāsa*) from himself. My Paramārādhyā Śrīla Gurudeva has shattered all these accusations with powerful logic and solid scriptural evidence, and this article presents his analysis of the subject.

The disciples and grand-disciples of Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda are currently preaching Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *suddha-kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and *śrī harināma* through-out the world. Because they have preached extensively all over the world, the streets and avenues in every prominent city—and even in every town and village—are resounding with the sound of the holy name, and young men and women are very enthusiastically applying themselves to the cultivation of *suddha-bhakti*. They are meeting Vaiṣṇavas from India, performing *harināma-saṅkīrtana* and preaching *suddha-bhakti* together with them. A few ignorant, so-called Vaiṣṇavas of the *sahajiyā* community are agitated by this, and are trying to mislead common people by presenting fraudulent accusations against the Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava lineage. Śrīla Gurudeva has established the rational and perfect conclusion on this matter in his own essay entitled 'Gauḍīya Vedantācārya Śrī Baladeva'. Here we have presented some extracts from that essay.

*i) The guru-paramparā of the commentator
Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa*

The historical truth regarding the *guru-paramparā* of the commentator, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is as follows. He first acquired specific expertise in the *bhakti-śāstra* under the guidance of Virakta-Śīromani (the crest-jewel of detached *sādhus*) Pītambara Dāsa. After that, he accepted *pañcarātriki-dīkṣā* from a Vaiṣṇava called Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Dāsa, who had appeared in a dynasty of *brāhmaṇas* in Kanyakubja. Rādhā-Dāmodara Dāsa, who was the grand-son of Rasikānanda Murārī, accepted *dīkṣā* from another Kanya-kubjiya *brāhmaṇa* called Śrī Nayanānandadeva Gosvāmī.

Rasikānanda Prabhu, a disciple of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu, is the fourth

guru before the commentator Baladeva Vidyā-bhūṣana in the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, and his son was the aforementioned Nayanānandadeva Gosvāmī. The guru of Śrī Śyāmānanda was Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya, whose guru was Gauridāsa Paṇḍita, upon whom Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu bestowed His mercy. Even though Śyāmānanda Prabhu was a disciple of Ācārya Hṛdaya Caitanya, he later accepted discipleship under Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was a disciple of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was a disciple of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī was a follower and associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

ii) *The śiṣya-paramparā of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa*

We have given an account of the *pañcarātrika-paramparā* from Śrīman Mahāprabhu down to Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. Now we will give an account of his *śiṣya-paramparā*. Śrī Uddhara Dāsa, referred to in some places as Uddhava Dāsa, was a disciple of the commentator. Some think that these are two different people, but in any case Uddhava Dāsa had a disciple named Śrī Madhusūdana Dāsa. Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī was a disciple of this very Śrī Madhusūdana Dāsa. Previously, as Vaiṣṇava Sarvaabhauma or the prominent leader of the Vaiṣṇava community in Mathurā-maṇḍala, Kṣetra-maṇḍala and Gauḍa-maṇḍala, he became famous by the name of Siddha Jagannātha Dāsa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura accepted this very Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja as his *bhajana-śikṣā-guru* by the system of *bhāgavata-paramparā*. It was under the direction of Vaiṣṇava Sarvaabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura discovered the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at Śrīdhama Māyāpura. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura was the *śikṣā-guru* or *bhajana-guru* of Śrīla Gaurakīśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Śrīla Gaurakīśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja accepted my Gurupādapaḍma Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottaraśata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda as his own disciple and gave him *dīkṣā-mantras* and so on. Whoever is incompetent in accepting this *paramparā* is to be counted amongst one of the thirteen types of *apasampradāyas* mentioned in writing by Śrī Totarama Bābājī

Mahārāja. Alternatively, he may be regarded as the creator of a fourteenth *apasampradāya*.

From the aforementioned *guru-paramparā* we can easily understand that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is a follower of Śrīman Mahāprabhu within the spiritual family lineage (*parivāra*) of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu. Ācārya Śrī Śyāmānanda accepted the guidance of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, and because Jīva Gosvāmī is exclusively *rūpānuga* (a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī), it therefore follows that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is also a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. There are those who acknowledge that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is in the line of Śrī Śyāmānanda, and yet deny that he is a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava or that he is qualified for the topmost service mood of *unnata-ujjala-rasa*. Such people are certainly only deluded offenders. Although Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was initiated in *pañcarātrika-dīkṣā* by Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara Dāsa, he also accepted *śikṣā* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the literatures of the Gosvāmīs.

iii) Pañcarātrika-paramparā is included within the bhāgavata-paramparā

The system of *bhāgavata-paramparā*, which is superior to that of *pañcarātrika-paramparā*, is founded on the degree of proficiency in *bhajana* (*bhajana-niṣṭha*). The charm and superiority of *bhāgavata-paramparā* is that *pañcarātrika-paramparā* is included within it. In *bhāgavata-paramparā* there is no obstruction in regard to time. From the viewpoint of *śuddha-bhakti*, the doctrines of *pañcarātrika* and of *bhāgavata* both explain the same teachings with the same objective. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said, *pañcarātra bhāgavate ei lakṣaṇa kaya* (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Madhya 19.169). The *prakṛta-sahajiyā sampradāya*, while claiming to be followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, accumulate offences to the lotus feet of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Similarly, nowadays the *jāti-gosvāmīs* and those who accept their remnants—such as several members of the *sahajiyā*, *kartābhajā*, *kiśorībhajā*, and *bhajanākhjā sampradāyas*—proudly conceive of themselves as followers of Cakravartī Ṭhākura, but cast calumnies against the commen-

tator Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. In this way, they are growing excessively hateful and progressing towards hell.

Here is a diagram of the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and the *bhāgavata-paramparā*. This will enable readers to properly appreciate the speciality of *śrī bhāgavata-paramparā*, and also understand how *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* is included within the *bhāgavata-paramparā*. With the help of the diagram below and on the next page we will give an account of the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā* of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Śrī Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and other Vaiṣṇava ācāryas.

Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu: In *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's disciple is Gauridāsa Paṇḍita, and his disciple Hṛdaya Caitanya is the *dīkṣā-guru* of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu. In *bhāgavata-paramparā* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's disciple is Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, the disciple of Sanātana is Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Rūpa's disciple is Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu is the *śikṣā* disciple of this same Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. It is no exaggeration to say that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was superior to Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya in *tattva, rasa, bhajana* and indeed in all respects. For this reason, Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya personally sent Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī for advanced instruction in the practice of *bhajana*, and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu accepted the *anugātya* (guidance) of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. Thus the serious question which deserves our consideration here is this: Which is superior, *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* or *bhāgavata-paramparā*?

Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura: According to the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura's guru is Śrī Lokanātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. However, there is no record anywhere of Śrī Lokanātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's *pañcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru*. Texts such as *Śrī Gauḍīya vaiṣṇava abhidhāna* have stated that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Śrī Lokanātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's guru, but it is a well-known fact that Śrīman Mahāprabhu did not accept anyone as His disciple according

to the *pañcarātrika-praṇālī* (method). That means that, if Śrīman Mahāprabhu is actually the *guru* of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī, it is only on the basis of *bhāgavata-paramparā*. In any case, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura, besides being the *pañcarātrika* disciple of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī, is also the disciple of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. It was in the *anugātya* of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī that Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura became steeped in *bhājana-śikṣā*.

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī: In *pañcarātrika-paramparā* Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is a disciple of Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, who is situated in the *pañcarātrika-sākhā* (branch) of Śrī Advaita Ācārya. However, if we consider Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's life history deeply from another viewpoint, we find the very clear and indelible influence of the *bhājana-śikṣā* of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who are his gurus in *bhāgavata-paramparā*. Here, too, if we compare *pañcarātrika-paramparā* with *bhāgavata-paramparā*, we find that the superiority of *bhāgavata-paramparā* shines as radiantly as the sun.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa: According to *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is a *pañcarātrika* disciple of Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara in the *paramparā* of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu. At the same time, in *bhāgavata-paramparā* he is a disciple of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura with whom he studied *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and all the various Gosvāmī literatures, and from whom he received advanced instruction in *bhājana*. The guidance of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in the life of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is widely known. Only under this guidance did he defeat the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas in the royal court of Galtā and keep intact the service and worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindajī. It was after attaining the mercy of Śrī Govindadeva, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's worshipful Deity, that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa composed *Śrī Govinda-bhāṣya*. There is no doubt about Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa being a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, because he is under the guidance of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who is himself most assuredly a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. Furthermore, it is a well-known fact that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa attained the mercy of Śrī Govindadeva, the treasured life-breath of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī,

and ensured His continuing service. From this perspective, too, since he attained the mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and his *ārādhya*deva Śrī Govindajī, what doubt could possibly remain about his being a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava?

Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura: According to the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā*, the *dīkṣā-guru* of Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is Śrī Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī, who is situated in the *pañcarātrika-paramparā* of Śrī Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuranī. From our other viewpoint, no one can deny that Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's life is imprinted with the stamp of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's *anugātya* (guidance). Vaiṣṇava Sarvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha Mahārāja is a disciple of the famous Madhu-sūdana Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in the *paramparā* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. It is not necessary to say that Vaiṣṇava Sarvabhauma Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is superior to Śrī Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī in *tattva-jñāna*, *bhājana-sīkṣā*, etc.

Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura: According to *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's *dīkṣā-guru* is Śrī Gaura Kīṣora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja who is a descendant in the *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* from Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuranī. Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja accepted the attire of a renunciate (*veśa*) from a disciple of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja named Śrī Bhāgavata Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Thus by *bhāgavata-paramparā*, Śrī Gaurakīṣora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is in the branch of Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. According to this analysis, by *pañcarātrika-paramparā* Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is in the *paramparā* of Śrī Jāhnavā Ṭhākuranī, and in *bhāgavata-paramparā* he has been connected with Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.

It is clear from Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda's life history that Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's practices, precepts and *bhājana-praṇālī* were his very life and soul, and that he made the fulfilment of the Ṭhākura's aspirations the sole aim and object of his life. Thus his *guru* in *bhāgavata-paramparā* was Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, whose *guru* was Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Therefore there is not even the slightest justification for raising a finger against the *guru-paramparā*

of Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura, the Founder-Acārya of the Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha.

Several additional facts are worthy of our consideration on the subject of *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā*—

(1) The *guru* of a lower *rasa*.

If a *pañcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* in his *siddha-svarūpa* (constitutional spiritual form) is situated in a *rasa* which lower than that of his disciple, how can he give *bhajana-śikṣā* pertaining to the more elevated *rasa*? In this situation, the disciple must go elsewhere and take shelter of a Vaiṣṇava who is qualified to give the appropriate superior guidance. For example, Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya is an associate in *sakhya-rasa* in Kṛṣṇa *līla*, whereas his disciple Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu (Duḥkhī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa) is an associate in *madhura-rasa*. Therefore Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya personally sent Duḥkhī Kṛṣṇa Dāsa to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī to receive higher *bhajana-śikṣā* pertaining to *madhura-rasa*.

(2) The less qualified *guru*.

It may happen that *guru* and disciple in *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* are in the same *rasa*, but that the *guru* is not so highly qualified as the disciple. Under such circumstances, the disciple must go and take shelter of an *uttama* Vaiṣṇava for higher *bhajana-śikṣā*, and this Vaiṣṇava will be called his *guru* in *bhāgavata-paramparā*.

We can see from these two considerations that the *pañcarātrika* process has some inherent defects, whereas the *bhāgavata-paramparā* is completely free from these defects, and is flawless in all respects.

(3) Śrīman Mahāprabhu is not *pañcarātrika-guru* of anyone.

All members of the Gauḍīya Sampradāya accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as *jagad guru*, and consider themselves to be His followers. However, on what basis do they maintain this conviction? There is no recorded account anywhere of Śrīman Mahāprabhu giving *dīkṣā*-

mantra to anyone. This means that Śrīman Mahāprabhu is not the guru of anyone else in *pañcarātrika-paramparā*, although He Himself is a disciple of Śrī Īśvara Purī. Therefore, if the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community accepts the *anugāṭya* and discipleship of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it can only be on one basis, and that basis is *bhāgavata-paramparā*.

(4) All Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are rūpānuga on basis of bhāgavata-paramparā only.

Each and every Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava is proud to call himself ‘rūpānuga’. But let us consider this point: How many disciples did Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī initiate by the *pañcarātrika* method? The fact is that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī is his one and only *dīkṣā* disciple, and he himself is not actually a *dīkṣā* disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. So on what basis do members of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community accept Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī as their guru? How is it possible to be a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and at the same time be a follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu? Even Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, who is the *śikṣā-guru* of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, has no second thoughts about calling himself *rūpānuga*. The basis of all these examples is one—*bhāgavata-paramparā*. It is only on the basis of *bhāgavata-paramparā* that Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī is the disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and that the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community considers Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī to be their guru.

Who is the *pañcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī? We cannot say, because he has not mentioned the name of his *pañcarātrika-dīkṣā-guru* in any of his literatures, but he has named his *śikṣā-gurus* in Śrī Caitanya-caritamṛta, *Adi* 1.37:

ei chaya guru, śikṣā-guru ye āmāra
tān-sabāra pāda-padme koṭi namaskāra

“These six gurus (the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana) are my *śikṣā-gurus* and I offer countless obeisances at their lotus feet.”

At the end of each chapter of Śrī Caitanya-caritamṛta he has written:

śrī-rupa-raghunātha-pade yāra āśa
caitanya caritāmṛta kahe kṛṣṇa dāsa

In these statements he has accepted Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī as his main *śikṣā-gurus*. Thus he has also accepted them as *gurus* on the basis of *bhāgavata-paramparā*. From these facts it becomes thoroughly obvious that *bhāgavata-paramparā*, which includes *pañcarātrika-paramparā*, always shines forth brilliantly. What can we say, then, about those who ignore these facts, about those who cast aspersions on the *guru-praṇālī* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and about those who doubt that they are *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas? Such people are certainly staunch opponents of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and secret agents of Kali.

Thus, whatever opinion my most worshipful Śrīla Gurudeva has written on the subject of the *guru-praṇālī* of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and also in regard to *pañcarātrika-guru-paramparā* and *bhāgavata-paramparā*, is both logical and fully in agreement with the established conclusions of the scriptures (*śāstra-siddhānta*).

The Gauḍīya Sampradāya is in the Line of Madhvācārya.

The followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accept the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya as the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya on the strength of the *guru paramparā*. This is mentioned by the prominent Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Kavi-karṇapūra and Gauḍīya Vedānta Ācārya Śrīla Baladeva Vidyabhūṣaṇa. Thus Gauḍīyas consider themselves to be a branch of the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya. Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas such as Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viṣvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Jagadguru Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī have also accepted this opinion. However these days some people are trying to establish their own concocted opinion that the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is an independent *sampradāya* of which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the original founder.

Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda and Śrī Ananta Vāsudeva, who became opposed to their gurudeva, have tried, together with some other personalities, to prove that the *sampradāya* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu is not included in the Śrī Brahma-Madhva Sampradāya. They state instead that it is included in the impersonalist *advaita-vādi sampradāya*. Originally, Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda Mahodaya accepted in his book

‘Ācārya Śrī Madhva’ that Mahāprabhu’s *sampradāya* is included in the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya. However, afterwards he considered that his own previous evidence was not authentic. In his later book, ‘*Acintya-bhedābheda*’, he tried unsuccessfully to prove that the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya is an independent *sampradāya*. All the arguments of the contending party are evident in his book.

Paramārādhyā Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārājajī, who is like a lion for the elephant-like heretics, wrote his own essay entitled *Acintya-bhedābheda*, in which he uses scriptural evidence and incontrovertible reasoning to refute all the arguments in Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda’s book. This essay has been published in several issues of the Bengali *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā* and the Hindi *Śrī Bhagavata Patrikā*. We shall now briefly mention some of those arguments and evidence.

The Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sampradāya is in the line of Śrī Madhva

First we shall mention two currently prominent arguments which Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda has put forward.

Objection 1: “According to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka*, Śrī Caitanyadeva accepted *sannyāsa veśa* from a *kevalādvaita-vāda sannyāsī*, Śrī Keśava Bhārati, and He has referred to himself as a *māyāvāda sannyāsī*. In addition to this, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, who was the guru of the *māyāvāda sannyāsīs* of Kāśī, also described him as a *sannyāsī* of the *māyāvādī sampradāya*.

keśava bhāratīra śiṣya tahe tumi dhanya

sāmpradāyī sannyāsī tumi raha ei grāme

“Sarvabhauma Bhatta Ācārya has also accepted this:

bhāratī sampradāya ei hayena madhyama

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 6.72)”

Refutation: This argument of the opposing party is totally unfounded, for the following reasons.

After a *jīva* has realised that material existence in the chain of birth and death is useless and distressful, he can recognise that the attainment of service to the lotus feet of Bhagavān is the supreme auspiciousness. Therefore one who is extremely fortunate accepts *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* from a person who is thoroughly versed in *śabda-brahma*, who is adorned with realisation of Bhagavān and who has no attachment for

sense gratification. That *jīva* then enters into *paramārtha*, the acquisition of his highest spiritual objective. In Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *nara-līlā* (human-like pastimes), He went to Gayā Dhāma on the pretext of making offerings (*pitṛ-śrāddha*) for the benefit of his deceased father. There He offered Himself fully at the lotus feet of Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda, who was the bud of the desire-tree of *prema*. He was also a supremely *rasika* and *bhāvuka* disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, the root of that desire-tree of *prema*.

prabhu bale gayā yātrā saphala āmāra
yatra kṣane dekhilān carāṇa tomāra
 (Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Ādi 17.50)

saṁsāra-samudra haite uddhāraha more
eī āmi deha samarpilān tomāre
kṛṣṇa-pāda-padmera amṛta-rasa pāna
āmāre karāo tumi ei cāhi dāna
āra dine nibhṛte īśvara purī sthāne
mantra dīkṣā cāhilena madhura-vacane
 (Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Ādi 17.54)

tabe tāna sthāne śikṣā-guru nārāyaṇa
karīlena daśākṣara mantrera grahaṇa
 (Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata, Ādi 17.107)

According to this section of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata*, Śrī Nimāi Paṇḍita performed the pastime of surrendering his heart at the feet of Śrī Īśvara Purī. He prayed to him for the *dīkṣā-mantra* in order to get release from material existence and to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa *prema*, and Śrī Purīpāda very affectionately gave him *dīkṣā* by the ten-syllable *mantra*.

Sometime afterwards, Śrī Nimāi Paṇḍita accepted *sannyāsa veśa* in Kaṭva from the *advaita-vāda sannyāsī* Śrī Keśava Bhārati. After accepting *sannyāsa* he set off for Vṛndāvana, saturated in the madness of *prema*. When he arrived in Rāḍha-deśa, absorbed in *prema*, he chanted a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

*etām sa āsthāya parātmaniṣṭhām
 adhyāsītām pūrvatamair mahārṣibhiḥ
 ahaṁ tariṣyāmi durantapāraṁ
 tamo mukundāṅghri niṣevayaiva*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.23.57)

“I shall easily cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by rendering service to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the great ṛṣis of ancient times, who were fixed in firm devotion to Mukunda.”

*prabhu kahe sādhu ei bhikṣuka-vacana
 mukunda sevanavrata kaila nirdhāraṇa
 parātmāniṣṭhāmātra veśa-dhāraṇa
 mukunda-sevāya haya saṁsāra-tāraṇa
 seī veśa kaila ebe vṛndāvana giyā
 kṛṣṇa-niṣevana kari’ nibhṛte vasiyā*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 3.7.9)

After accepting *sannyāsa*, Mahāprabhu said, “This promise of the *tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu* is supremely true because the vow to serve the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is fixed by accepting this *veśa*. Having renounced dedication to material sense objects, the purpose of accepting this *veśa* is *parātmā-niṣṭha*, single-pointed devotion to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I have accepted this *veśa*, so now I will go to Vṛndavana and serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.”

In the above verse, the phrase ‘*parātmāniṣṭhāmātra veśa-dhāraṇa*’ is particularly worthy of consideration. It indicates that Mahāprabhu only accepted *veśa* from Śrī Keśava Bhārati because it was favourable for the cultivation of *bhagavad-bhakti*. He did not accept any *mantra* or any doctrines of *advaita-vāda*. On the contrary, throughout His life He refuted *kevalādvaita-vāda* and the conclusions of *māyāvāda*. It is clear that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted only Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda as his genuine *guru*, because it is Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda’s *śuddha-bhakti* that He accepted, preached and propagated throughout His life.

Śrī Mādhavendra Purīpāda and Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda are included within the Madhva Sampradāya, so Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his followers, the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, are also included in the Madhva Sampradāya. Moreover, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's contemporary pastime associates Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, Brahmānanda Purī and others are also followers of the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya because they are all in the line of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu always respected the disciples of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī as his gurus, and He treated the disciples of Śrī Īśvara Purī as Godbrothers. *Guru ājñā haya avicāranīya*: "One should not deliberate on the validity of the order of the guru." According to this conclusion, He accepted Govinda as His servant. It is proved by this that Īśvara Purī was actually His Guru.

Another point is as follows. Śrī Madhvācārya accepted *sannyāsa* from Acyutaprekṣa, who was also a *kevalādvaita-vādī*. Suppose we accept the opinion of the opposing party, just for the sake of argument. In that case, if Mahāprabhu is a *kevalādvaita-vādī sannyāsī*, then by the same logic so is Madhvācārya. Where, then, is the obstacle to Śrīman Mahāprabhuji's being in the Madhva Sampradāya, if both of them accepted the *advaita-vādī* Śaṅkara's *sampradāya*? There is a second point here. Śrī Madhvācārya accepted *eka-daṇḍa* (a single staff of renunciation) according to the customs and regulations of the Śaṅkara *sampradāya*. It would be logically consistent to say that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu followed his ideal example, and also accepted *eka-daṇḍa sannyāsa* from a *sannyāsī* of the Śaṅkara *sampradāya*, namely Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. From this it seems clear that Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are in the line of Śrī Madhvācārya.

Objection 2: "Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Ācārya Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has not mentioned any sort of relationship between the Gauḍīya Sampradāya and the Madhva Sampradāya anywhere in his literatures such as *Tattva-sandarbhā* or *Sarva-saṁvādinī*. This idea has been introduced by Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, who was initiated into the Madhva Sampradāya in the early part of his life and only later entered the

Gauḍīya Sampradāya. For this reason he had a natural inclination toward the Madhva Sampradāya. Therefore Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has forced the issue out of prejudice, and has mentioned the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya in his commentary on *Tattva-sandarbha*. In his *Prameya Ratnāvalī* he delineated a *guru-paramparā* which includes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His *sampradāya* within the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya."

Refutation: These accusations are completely groundless and imaginative fabrications. Actually Jīva Gosvāmī acknowledged the *tattva-vāda* of Śrī Madhva Ācārya, who is the guru of *tattva-vāda*, and took support from it when he compiled his *Tattva-sandarbha*, *Bhagavata-sandarbha* and so on. Not only this, but he also cited in his literatures the fundamental *pramāṇa* or substantiating verses of *tattva-vāda* such as, 'vādanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam' (S.B. 1.2.11).

Of the four *vaiṣṇava sampradāya-ācāryas*, only Madhvācārya is celebrated by the name of *tattva-vādī*. Since Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has personally established *tattva-vāda*, the Vaiṣṇavas of the Madhva-Gauḍīya Sampradāya are therefore *tattva-vādīs*. In the third *śloka* of the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (auspicious invocation) of *Tattva-sandarbha*, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī glorifies his guru Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his paramguru Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī as '*tattvajñāpakau*' (the *ācāryas* who proclaim *tattva*). Similarly, the crown of the dynasty of *vaiṣṇava ācāryas*, Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu, has also designated Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana as '*tattva-vid-uttamau*' (the highest of all knowers of *tattva*) in his commentary on this same *śloka*.

It is clear from this that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has offered respect to Śrī Madhvācārya, and that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has followed Jīva Gosvāmī in honouring Madhvācārya. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu, has not shown any prejudice towards Madhvācārya. On the contrary, if we compare Jīva Gosvāmī with Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, we find that Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has glorified the two Gosvāmīs Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana more than Jīva Gosvāmī has. There is no doubt whatsoever that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is situated in the *āmnāya-dhārā* (the transcendental current of conclusive evidence) or the *paramaparā* of Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Prabhus and of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmīpāda who

immediately follows them. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is in the ninth generation from Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu according to *bhāgavat-paramparā*, and in the eighth generation according to *pañcarātrika-paramparā*. Historians have accepted his *pañcarātrika-paramparā* as follows: Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, Hṛdaya Caitanya, Syāmānanda Prabhu, Rasikānanda Prabhu, Nayanānanda Prabhu and Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara. Śrī Baladeva Prabhu is the initiated disciple of this Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara and is also the most prominent *śikṣā* disciple of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī.

Historians have declared that in no branch of the Madhva *guru-paramparā* were there any brilliant scholars of such widespread fame as Baladeva. In fact, at that time no one in any *sampradāya* anywhere in India could equal Śrī Baladeva's knowledge in logic, in *Vedānta* and in *śāstra* such as the *Purāṇas* and *itihāsas*. It is true that he stayed for some days in the most prominent *maṭha* established by Śrī Madhvācārya in Uḍḍipī, and that he studied the Śrī Madhva commentary on *Vedānta*; however, the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya was more of an influence upon him than the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya.

It is natural for scholarly personalities, who are worshipful throughout the worlds and who are even the preceptors of other great preceptors, to follow in the lotus-footsteps of the *vaiṣṇava ācāryas* of the very influential Madhva-Gauḍīya Sampradāya. Śrī Baladeva thoroughly studied the commentary of Madhva, and also made a meticulous study of the commentaries of Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Bhāskara Ācārya, Nimbārka, Vallabha and others. It is illogical to say that he is included in each one of those *sampradāyas* because he had studied those groups of philosophers.

Śrī Baladeva Prabhu has described historical events and quoted the conclusions of the previous Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* in many literatures, such as his *Govinda-bhāṣya*, *Siddhānta-ratnam*, *Prameya-ratnāvalī* and his commentary on *Tattva-sandharba*. He has enabled all the philosophers of the world to understand that the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is included within the Madhva Sampradāya. In this regard all the scholars of the world, eastern and western, ancient

and modern, have bowed their heads in reverence, and have unanimously accepted the *siddhānta* and opinions of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was sent by Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī to protect the honour of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *saṁpradāya* in the Galtā Gaddī in Jaipura. There he defeated the objecting *paṇḍitas* of the Śrī *saṁpradāya* in scriptural debate. There are no second opinions about this. Does this not show that Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura personally inspired his *śikṣā* disciple Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa to prove that the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are in the line of Madhvācārya? Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura sent his *dīkṣā* disciple Śrī Kṛṣṇadeva Sarvabhauma with Śrī Baladeva to help him. If Śrī Cakravartī Ṭhākura had not been so aged and weak at that time, he certainly would have gone to Jaipur in person to take part in this debate about the *saṁpradāya*. He would also have established the very same conclusion as Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. There is no sound evidence to prove that Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was first an *ācārya* or disciple in the Madhva *Sampradāya*. There may be hearsay and imaginative rumours, but no one has given any substantial proof.

The opposition party has alleged that Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has not mentioned anywhere in his literature that Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are in the line of the Madhva *Sampradāya*. This accusation is born of ignorance and is absurd in the extreme. In numerous places in *Tattva-sandarbhā*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions his being in the line of Madhva. Moreover, while composing *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhā*, he accepted the guidance of *ācāryas* in the Śrī Madhva *Sampradāya* such as Vijayadhvaṇa, Śrī Brahmanyaṭīrtha and Vyāsaṭīrtha, and collected many scriptural proofs from their literatures. It is true that he has also quoted the statements of Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya and Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda in many places, but he has not considered these *ācāryas* to be previous *ācāryas* of the Śrī Gauḍīya *Sampradāya*. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has even accepted the statements of sages of different philosophical schools such as Kapila and Pātāñjalī when they are favourable to *bhakti*. Nonetheless, that does not mean that he is within those *saṁpradāyas*. One may establish a specific point of *siddhānta* which supports the views of an *ācārya* of a

particular *sampradāya*. That does not mean that one is then a member of that *sampradāya*. Only when the *siddhānta* is established by taking all the opinions of the *ācārya*'s disciple and grand-disciple is the person establishing that conclusion considered to be in that *sampradāya*, otherwise not.

A part of the writings of Sila Jīva Gosvāmī in regard to this topic is quoted here:

atra ca sva-darśitārtha-viśeṣa-prāmāṇyāyaiva. na tu śrīmad-bhāgavata-vākya-prāmāṇyāya pramāṇāni śruti-purāṇādi vacanām yathā dṛṣṭam evodāharanī yāni. kvacit svayamadrṣṭākarāṇi ca tattva-vāda-gurunāmādhunikānām śrīmac chan̄karācārya śīsyatām labhvā'pi śrī bhagavatapaksapatena tato vicchīdya, pracura-pracārīta vaisnavatama- viśeṣānām daksinādi-deśavikhyāta-'śīsyopāśīsyabhūta'- 'vijayadhvaṇa'- 'jayatīrtha'- 'brahmanvatīrtha'-vyāsātīrthādi-veda-vedārtha'vidvadvarānām 'śrī-madhvacārya-carānām'bhāgavata tātparya-bhārata-tātparya, brahma-sūtra-bhāṣyādibhyah saṅgrhītāni. tāiścairamuktaṁ bhārata tātparye (2.1.8)

*śāstrāntarāṇi sañjānan vedāntasya prasādataḥ
deśe deśe tathā granthān dṛṣṭvā caiva pṛthag vidhān
yathā sa bhagavān vyāsaḥ sāksān nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuh
jagāda bhāratādyeṣu tathā vakṣye tadīkṣayā iti*
(Tattva-sandarbha 97-98)

tatra taduddhatā śrutiś catur veda śikhādyā, purāṇāṇ ca gāruḍādīnām samprati sarvatrā-pracaradrūpamaṁśādīkam; saṁhitā ca mahāsaṁ hitādīkā; taṁtraṇca taṁtra bhāgavataṁ brahma tarkadīkamiti jñeyam.
“I (Jīva Gosvāmī) have quoted various authentic scriptural statements as evidence in the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbha* literature. This is to establish the authenticity of my own interpretation or opinion which I have expressed in this literature; it is not to try to prove that the statements or conclusions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are authentic. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, like the *Vedas*, is self-evident (*svataḥ-pramāṇa*) and therefore does not depend upon any second evidence. In this literature I have quoted various statements of evidence from the original texts of *śruti-smṛti*, the

Purāṇas and so on, exactly as I have personally seen them in those literatures. Besides that, my predecessor *ācāryas* from among the *guru-varga* of *tattva-vāda* have cited evidence which I, the author of *Tattva-sandarbha* (*tattva-vādī*), have also quoted although there are several of the original texts which I have not seen personally. These *tattva-vādī* predecessor *gurus*, such as Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, have accepted the *śiṣyatva* of Śrī Śaṅkara Ācārya by accepting *sannyāsa* from *ācāryas* in the Śaṅkara *saṃpradāya*. Nonetheless, because of their strong inclination to Bhagavān, they remained completely aloof from the doctrines of Śaṅkara. They broadly promulgated *vaiṣṇava* doctrines of *ācāryas* which contain various specialities from the conclusions of the *ācāryas*. The disciples and grand-disciples of the renowned Ānandatīrtha, namely Vijayadhvaja, Brahmanyatīrtha and Vyāsātīrtha have collected evidence from literatures such as *Bhāḡavata-tātparya*, *Bhārata-tātparya* and *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* composed by Śrīman Madhvācārya, the best of those who know the *Vedas* and their inner purport.

“In his *Bhārata-tātparya*, Śrīman Madhvācārya has also written, ‘By the grace of *Vedānta* and the *Upaniṣads*, I will establish the *siddhānta*, since I know the confidential mystery of various other *śāstras*, I have investigated varieties of literature from different countries and I have honour for the conclusions expressed in texts such as the *Mahābhārata* written by the direct manifestation of Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa.’

“I (Jīva Gosvāmī) am composing *Tattva-sandarbha* following the above statements of Śrīman Madhvācārya. I am accepting statements quoted by him and those in his line, without having personally seen the originals of many of the texts. This includes *tantra* such as *saṃhitā* and *mahāsaṃhitā*, *tantra-bhāḡavata* and *brahmatarka*.”

This evidence clearly proves that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has accepted only Śrīman Madhvācārya as the predecessor *ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya *Sampradāya*. Nowhere does Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī give such a clear statement in regard to Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya or Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda. Specifically he has not accepted all the conclusions of the disciples and grand-disciples of any *saṃpradāya ācārya* other than Madhva. Śrī

Rāmānuja Ācārya had many disciples and grand-disciples, and Śrīdhara Svāmī also had many disciples, but Jīva Gosvāmī has not written down their names anywhere. What to speak of mentioning Nimbārka Ācārya's name, we cannot find even a scent of his existence anywhere in Jīva Gosvāmī's literature.

Objection 3: "Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has described the glories of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in a verse in the *maṅgalācaraṇa* of his *Sarva-saṁvādinī*. Praying to Mahāprabhu, he has described Him as 'sva-sampradāya-sahasrādhidaiva' (the eternal presiding Deity of thousands upon thousands of *sampradāyas* founded by Him). How, then, can He be included within any other *sampradāya*? He is personally the founder of the independent Gauḍīya Sampradāya."

Refutation: This objection is quite ridiculous. The complete verse from the *maṅgalācaraṇa* of *Sarva-saṁvādinī* reads as follows:

durlabha-prema-pīyūṣagaṅgā-prayāha-sahasraṁ sva-sampradāya-sahasrādhidaivaṁ śrī kṛṣṇa caityadeva nāmānam śrī bhagavāntam
 Śrī Sundarānanda Vidyāvinoda and other antagonists have interpreted 'sva-sampradāya-sahasrādhidaivam' in this verse to mean 'the presiding Deity of thousands of *sampradāyas* which Śrīman Mahāprabhu has personally inaugurated.' The salient point here is that Śrīman Mahāprabhu has not founded thousands of *sampradāyas*; He has established only one *sampradāya*, which is called the Śrī Madhva-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya. Therefore their interpretation is completely mistaken.

Śrī Rasikamohana Vidyābhūṣaṇa Mahodaya has interpreted 'svasampradāya-sahasrādhidaiva' in another way as 'the supreme presiding Deity of his own *sampradāya*.' This meaning is quite appropriate, and all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas have accepted it. One may say, "Śrīman Mahāprabhu is Svayaṁ Bhagavān, and is directly Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra. Is it necessary for Svayaṁ Bhagavān Gauracandra to consider any other personality as His guru, and to accept *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* from him?" The

(1). *prādeśamātra*. A measurement equal to the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the index finger.

answer is, "Yes, it is necessary, when Śrī Bhagavān performs his *nara-līlā* (human-like pastimes)." Śrī Rāmacandra has exhibited the pastime of accepting *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* from Vasiṣṭha Muni, Śrī Kṛṣṇa from Sāndīpani Muni, and Śrīman Mahāprabhu from Īśvara Purīpāda. These activities do not effect their *bhagavatā* (Godhood) even in the slightest way. Svayaṁ Bhagavān performs such pastimes in order to give instructions to the world.

There is no question of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *tattva* being lost if He is included in any *sampradāya*. It is not the personal duty of Bhagavān to found a *sampradāya*; His devotees do that. History shows that in all cases only Viṣṇu *śakti* or the servants of Viṣṇu have ever founded a *sampradāya*. Granted, Śrī Bhagavān is the original, eternal personality of *sanātana-dharma* which He Himself establishes, as is evident in scriptural statements such as '*dharman tu sākṣāt bhagavat pranītam*' (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19) and '*dharma jagannāthaḥ sākṣāt nārāyaṇāḥ*' (Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva 348.54). Still the statement '*akartā caiva kartā ca karyam kāraṇam eva ca*' (Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva 348.7) shows that Bhagavān has no direct agency in the business of establishing a *sampradāya*. Rather, He accomplishes this task through his empowered representatives. If it were not so, then instead of the Brahma, Rudra, Sanaka and Śrī Sampradāyas, there would be the Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Nārāyaṇa Sampradāyas.

Objection 4: "While touring in South India, Śrīman Mahāprabhu went to Udūpī. There he had a discussion with a *tattva-vādī ācārya*, who was in Śrī Madhvācārya's *sampradāya*. Mahāprabhu refuted the views of the *tattva-vādīs*, so He can never be included in that *sampradāya*."

Refutation: Śrīman Mahāprabhuḥ did not directly refute Madhvācārya's ideas about *śuddha-bhakti*. Rather, He refuted the distorted opinions of the *tattva-vādīs* which had entered into the Madhva Sampradāya in the course of time. Readers can understand this simply by looking in this section of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 9. 276.277)

*prabhu kahe — karmī, jñānī, dui bhaktihīna
tomara sampradāye dekhi sei dui cihna
sabe eka guṇa dekhi tomāra sampradāye
satya-vigraha tśvare karaḥa niścaye*

“*Karmīs* and *jñānīs* are devoid of devotion, and it is seen that both of these are respected in your *sampradāya*. Still, in your *sampradāya* there is one very great quality—the form of Bhagavān or *śrī vigraha* has been accepted. Not only this, but *śrī vigraha* has also been accepted as Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is worshipped in your *sampradāya* in the form of Nṛtya-Gopāla.”

This proves that Śrīman Mahāprabhu refuted distortions which later entered the Madhva Sampradāya in the course of time. He did not refute Madhvācārya’s opinions on *śuddha-bhakti* or the fundamental conclusions that he expressed in his commentaries. On the contrary, we have already shown that literatures such as *Tattva-sandarbhā* and *Sarva-saṁvādinī* have been based on the conclusions of Śrī Madhva and his disciples and grand-disciples. In this connection we should point out that a difference of *sampradāya* does not generally arise from some minor difference of opinion. Rather, the difference between *sampradāya* comes from the differences of theory about the principal object of worship.

Objection 5: “Madhvācārya’s doctrine includes the following specific points: (a) liberation is only attained by *brāhmaṇas* who have taken birth in a *brāhmaṇa* dynasty; (b) among devotees, the *devas* are prominent; (c) only Brahma merges with Viṣṇu; (d) Lakṣmījī is in the category of *jīva*; and (e) the *gopīs* are in the category of the *āpsarās* of Svarga. However, in the opinion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* in his line these conceptions of Madhva are contradictory to the conclusions of *śuddha-bhakti*. Under such circumstances, why would Śrī Caitanyadeva accept the Madhva Sampradāya? That being the case, how can the *ācāryas* following in his Gaudīya Sampradāya be included within the Madhva Sampradāya?”

Refutation: When Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was in Galtā Gaddī in Jaipur, he used śāstric evidence and incontrovertible logic to break to pieces all these arguments of the opposition party. He quoted the conclusions of Madhvācārya as well as those of his disciples and grand-disciples such as Vijayadhvaṇa, Brahmanyatīrtha and Vyāsātīrtha. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has refuted all such accusations in his literary compositions such as his commentary on *Tattva-sandarbhā*, his *Govinda-bhāṣya*, *Siddhānta-ratnam* and *Prameya-ratnāvalī*, and he has proved that the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya is included within the Madhva Sampradāya.

In the Galtā Gaddī assembly, Baladeva proved that Madhva considered Lakṣmījī to be the dear consort of Viṣṇu. Madhva taught that her spiritual body is composed of knowledge and pleasure and, like Viṣṇu, she is also completely free from defects, such as the misery of being confined in the womb prior to birth. She is all-pervading, and she also enjoys in unlimited forms along with the unlimited forms of Viṣṇu. When the *avatāra* of Viṣṇu descends, Lakṣmījī also descends and remains splendidly present in the form of that *avatara*'s dear beloved consort.

Like Viṣṇu, Lakṣmījī also has various names and forms (*Bṛhad-āranyaka Bhāṣya* 3.5, written by Śrī Madhva). Further-more, Lakṣmīdevī is Viṣṇu's subservient embodiment of all knowledge. She is also superior to and more qualified than Caturmukha Brahmā. She exists radiantly on the limbs of Bhagavān in the form of various types of ornaments, and it is she who manifests all facilities for the pleasure of Viṣṇu, such as his bed, seat, throne, ornaments and so on. (This is from Śrī Madhvācārya's explanation of *Brahma-sūtra* 4.2.1, supported by *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.13) Nowhere has Śrī Madhva described Śrī Lakṣmījī to be in the category of *jīva*.

Similarly, the ideas that only *brāhmaṇas* attain liberation, that the *devas* are the prominent devotees, that only Brahmā merges with Viṣṇu and

(2) (a) *śrīmadhvamate hariḥ paratamaḥ satam jagattattvato bhado jīvagaṇā hareranucarā nīcoccābhāvam gatāḥ* (from the literature of Śrī Jayatīrtha and Śrī Trivikramācārya), (b) 'mokṣam viṣṇavaṅghrilābham' (*Prameyaratnāvalī*)

so on, are all foreign to the Madhva Sampradāya. On this subject Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has explained in his *The Teachings of Śrīman Mahāprabhu* why Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has accepted the Madhva Sampradāya.

“Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, having determined the authenticity of one whose speech is true, has also ascertained the authenticity of the *Purāṇas*. Ultimately he has proved that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the crest jewel of all evidence. He has shown that the same characteristic qualities which qualify *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the topmost evidence also apply to the scriptures certified by Brahmā, Nārada, Vyāsa, Sukadeva and after them in sequence Vijayadhvaja, Brahmanyatīrtha, Vyāsātīrtha, and their *tattva-guru* Śrīman Madhvācārya. These scriptures, then, are also in the category of authentic literatures.

“It is clearly evident from this that the Brahma-Madhva Sampradāya is the *guru-praṇālī* (system) of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who have taken shelter of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Kavikarṇapura confirmed this same idea in his delineation of the *guru-paramparā* in his *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*. The commentator of *Vedānta-sūtra* Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has also accepted this same succession. There is no doubt at all that those who do not accept this succession are prominent enemies of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who are following in His footsteps.

“The doctrine of *bhedābheda* or *dvaitādvaita* which Nimbārka propounded is incomplete. It is in accepting the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that the *vaiṣṇava* world has attained the complete perfection of the doctrine of *bhedābheda*. The principal foundation-stone of *acintya-bhedābheda* is *sac-cid-ānanda vigraha*, and it is because Śrī Madhvācārya has accepted the *sac-cid-ānanda vigraha* that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has accepted the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya.

“There is a technical difference between the philosophical ideas which the previous Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have propagated because there some slight incompleteness in those philosophical ideas. The difference in *sampradāya* is due to this technical difference. Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu, who is directly *para-tattva*, has shown compassion on the world and given His own thoroughly pure and realised doctrine of *acintya-bhedābheda*. By the power of His omniscience, He has completed and made flawless all those opinions which were suffering from some deficiency, for example, Madhva's *sac-cid-ananda nitya-vigraha*, Rāmānuja Ācārya's *śakti-siddhānta*, Viṣṇu-svāmī's *śuddhādvaita siddhānta* and tadīya *sarvasvatva* and Nimbarka's *nitya dvaitādvaita siddhānta*." (*The Teachings of Śrīman Mahāprabhu*, p. 110).

Another reason for Śrīman Mahāprabhu's acceptance of Madhva's opinion is that Madhva's doctrine distinctly refutes *māyāvāda* or *kevalādvaita-vāda*, which is opposed to *bhakti-tattva* in all respects. A third point is that Śrī Madhvācārya manifested and worshipped Nanda-nandana Nartaka-Gopāla in Uḍupī. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had *darśana* of the Deity, He became overwhelmed in ecstatic love and began to dance. He had not seen such a Deity anywhere else during his tour of South India. This is also powerful evidence for His being in Madhva's line.

In his *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vijaya*, Śrī Guṇarāja Khān wrote the line, *Nanda-nandana kṛṣṇa—mora prāṇanātha*: "Nanda-nandana Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of my life" (quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 15.100), and for this utterance Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu sold Himself forever into the hands of Śrī Guṇarāja Khān's descendants. Why, then, would He not sell Himself to the *paramparā* of those disciples and grand-disciples for whom Nanda-nandana Nartaka-Gopāla is their most worshipful Lord? This is also specific evidence that the Gaudīya Sampradāya is in the line of Madhva.

Although there is some slight difference of opinion between Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas and Śrī Madhva in regard to Brahman, *jīva* and *jagat*, this simple difference of opinion is not the cause of a difference of *sampradāya*. The difference between Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* has been created on the basis of a difference in *upāsya-tattva* (the object of worship) or on the basis of gradations of excellence between aspects of *para-tattva*. Even if there is some slight difference in regard to *sādhya*, *sādhana* and *sādhaka-tattva*, this is rarely considered to be the cause

of a difference of *sampradāya*. Actually, it is the difference in realisation of *para-tattva* or *upāśya-tattva* (the worshipful Supreme Truth) which is the main cause of distinct *sampradāyas*. This was why Śrīman Mahāprabhu overlooked the philosophical differences with the *tattva-vādīs* and, focusing on the worship of *para-tattva* Nartaka-Gopāla, accepted Śrī Madhvācārya as the prominent *sampradāya ācārya*.

Objection 6: Some persons who are ignorant of *sampradāya-tattva* say, “Śrī Mādhavendra Purī and Īśvara Purī cannot be *sannyāsīs* of the Madhva Sampradāya because they have the designation ‘Purī’, whereas *sannyāsīs* in the Madhva Sampradāya are called ‘Tīrtha.’ If Śrī Mādhavendra Purī is not included within the Madhva Sampradāya, then there are no grounds for claiming that Śrīman Mahāprabhu has accepted the Madhva Sampradāya.”

Refutation: Śrī Mādhavendra Purīpāda’s title ‘Purī’ is his *sannyāsa* name. Actually, he was the initiated disciple of Lakṣmīpati Tīrtha, who was in the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya. Śrī Mādhavendra Purīpāda later accepted *sannyāsa* from a *sannyāsī* bearing the name ‘Purī,’ just as Śrīman Mahāprabhu first accepted *dīkṣā* from Śrī Īśvara Purī and later manifested the pastime of accepting *sannyāsa* from Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. There is no rule that the *dīkṣā-guru* and *sannyāsa-guru* have to be the same person. In some cases they may be, and in others not. Śrī Madhvācārya himself was first initiated in a Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* by the Viṣṇu *mantra* and after that accepted *sannyāsa-veśa* from an *advaita-vādī*, Acyutaprekṣa. After some days, Śrī Madhvācārya influenced Acyutaprekṣa and brought him into the Vaiṣṇava conception. Even after taking *sannyāsa* from an *advaita-vādī*, Śrī Madhvācārya did not accept *advaita-vāda*. On the contrary, he powerfully refuted all the ideas of *advaita-vāda* and, having established *tattva-vāda*, he preached and spread it everywhere. The same is also seen in the life of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

It is true that *sannyāsīs* in the Madhva Sampradāya are called ‘Tīrtha’, but ‘Tīrtha’ is not the title of *grhastha-vaiṣṇavas* or *brahmacārīs* in that *sampradāya*. Since Śrī Mādhavendra Purī did not have the title ‘Tīrtha’ before taking *sannyāsa*, when he accepted *veśa* from a *sannyāsī*

in the *advaita-sampradāya*, his title had to be 'Purī.' This is not illogical.

Objection 7: Some say, "The *sādhya* (goal) and *sādhana* (practice) of the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya differ from that of the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya. Therefore the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya cannot be considered to be within the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya."

Refutation: This objection is thoroughly false and rooted in ignorance. Madhva's doctrine acknowledges *bhagavat-bhakti* as the *sādhana* in all respects. As with Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the initial *sādhana* prescribed for *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī sādhakas* (neophyte practitioners) is offering the results of ones' fruitive activities to Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-karmārpanam*). However, *bhagavat-parama-prasāda sādhana* (i.e. *śuddha-bhakti*) has been established as the principal practice.

Śrī Madhvācārya has established *bhakti* as we see from his *Sūtra-bhāṣya* (3.3.53): *bhaktir evainam nayati bhaktir evainam darśayati bhaktivaśaḥ puruṣo bhaktir eva bhūyasi iti mātḥaraśrutāḥ*. In *sūtra* 3.3.45 he writes, *varāhe ca guru-prasādo balavānna tasmād valavattaram/ tathāpi śravaṇādiś ca karttavayo mokṣa-siddhaye*: "The mercy of Śrī Gurudeva is more powerful than anything else for attaining the perfection of liberation in the form of service to Viṣṇu's lotus feet. Yet it is still more necessary in engagement in the limbs of *sādhana-bhakti* such as *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*." In his text *Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya* (Defining the Purport of *Mahābhārata*) the position of *bhakti* is seen throughout: *sneho bhaktir iti proktastayā muktir na cānyathā* (1.105) and *bhaktyaiva tuṣyati hariḥ pravratvam eva* (2.59). We have not given more evidence simply because of lack of space.

In the Madhva Sampradāya, love of Bhagavān is the only *sādhya*. Although Śrīman Madhvācārya has accepted *mokṣa* as the goal in some places, his definition of *mokṣa* is, *viṣṇav-āṅghri lābhaḥ mukti*: "Liberation is the attainment of service to the lotus feet of Viṣṇu." Thus, the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya accepts the definition of *mukti* spoken by *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *muktir hitvānyathā rūpaṁ svarūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ*: "The *jīva* carries the conception of 'I' and 'mine' arising

from the gross and subtle designations which are accomplished by the action of *māyā*. *Mukti* means to be released from this false identity and to be established in rendering loving service to Bhagavān in one's pure constitutional form." Madhvācārya's *mukti* is not the *sāyujya* (merging with Brahman) spoken of by Śaṅkara. Rather, it is based on love of Bhagavān. Nowhere has he accepted *sāyujya* in the form of the oneness of Brahman and *jīva*. On the contrary, he has refuted it in every way. Madhva is well known as a *bheda-vādī* because he accepts the *jīva* and Brahman as being different both in the stage of bondage and of liberation—*abhedaḥ sarva-rūpeṣu jīvabhedaḥ sadaiva hi*.

Although Śrīman Madhva emphasises *bheda* (difference), he does not at all disregard *śrutis* which indicate *abheda* (non-difference); instead he has accepted their compatibility. In other words, we find a hint of the acceptance of *acintya-bhedābheda*, as Śrīla Jīva Goswami has suggested in his *Sandharbha* literature. According to *Vedānta-sūtra*, *śakti śaktimator abhedaḥ*: "The potency and the potent are not different." An indication of *acintya-bhedābheda* is found in a statement of *Brahma-tarka* which Śrī Madhva supported.

*viśeṣasya viśiṣṭasyāpy abhedas tadvad eva tu
sarvam ca cintya-śaktitvād yujyate parameśvare
tac chaktyaiva tu jīveṣu cid-rūpa-prakṛtāvāpi
bhedābhedaḥ tad-anyatra hy ubhayor api darśanāt*
(Brahma-tarka)

Thus there is no particular difference between Madhvācārya and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu regarding *sādhya* and *sādhana*. Whatever slight difference is evident is only mutual *vaiśiṣṭya* (speciality).

There is a very specific similarity between the Madhva and Gauḍīya Sampradāyas. The *sannyāsīs* presiding over the eight *maṭhas* of the

(³) See the first edition of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta published by Śrī Hakīmji. In his Caitanya Caranacumbinī commentary, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 9, verse 249, Hakīmji has also written that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is not a sampradāyācārya — a conclusion to which he is now opposed.

tattva-vādīs in Uḍḍipī perform *bhajana* in the mood of the *gopīs* under the guidance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eight beloved *nāyikās* (heroines) in Vraja. On this subject, Śrī Padmanābhacārī, the author of Śrī Madhvācārya's biography, has written, "The monks who take charge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in rotation are so many *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana who moved with and loved Śrī Kṛṣṇa with an indescribable intensity of feeling, and are taking rebirths now for the privilege of worshipping Him" (*Life and Teachings of Śrī Madhvācārya* by C.M. Padmanābhacārī, Chapter XII, page 145).

Even today, the service of Yasodānandana Nṛtya-Gopāla is seen in the prominent *maṭha* in Uḍḍipī. Śrīla Madhvācārya has praised his *iṣṭadeva* Nartaka Gopāla Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this way in chapter six, verse five of his *Dvādaśa Stotram*:

*devakinandana nanda-kumāra
vṛndāvanāñjana gokulacandra
kandaphalāśana sundara-rūpa
nanditugokula vanditapāda*

Similarly, in the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of the *gopīs* has been ascertained as the *sādhya* in the writings of Śrīla Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī and others.

In this way, by evaluating the opinions of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* from first to last, one can conclude that the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya is included within the Śrī Madhva Sampradāya and that this is consistent with reason in all respects.

Objection 8: "The Madhva Sampradāya is *bheda-vādī*, whereas the Gauḍīya Sampradāya is *acintya-bhedābheda-vādī*. Therefore there is a vast difference of opinion between them."

Refutation: We have said previously that, although the Madhva Sampradāya accepts five kinds of *bheda* between Brahman, *jīva* and *jagat*, still there is a hint of *acintya-bhedābheda-vāda* in their

teachings. The Vedic scriptures give evidence both for *bheda* and *abheda* in relation to Brahman, *jīva* and *jagat*. However, although there is both *bheda* and *abheda*, we only have experience of *bheda*, not of *abheda*. In the field of *bhakti*, the difference (*bheda*) between *upāsya* (the object of worship) and *upāsaka* (the worshipper) is the back-bone of worship, and this *bheda* is proved both in the stage of *sādhana* and *siddha*. Otherwise, if there were no difference between the worshipper and the object of worship, then worship would not be possible. Thus, although there may be some mutual difference between the Śrī Gauḍīya and Madhva Sampradāyas, this cannot be the cause of a difference in *sampradāya*. The object of worship is Bhagavān, the method of worship is *bhakti* and the objective is *mokṣa* in the form of *bhagavat-sevā*. Vaiṣṇavas of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* hold slightly different opinions in regard to these *tattvas*, but we cannot say that they are fundamentally different. They are all adherents to the same religious principles.

The difference between Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* has been created only on the basis of difference in *upāsya-tattva* (worshipful Deity) or a difference of excellence in regard to *para-tattva*. Though there may even exist a difference in *sādhya*, *sādhana* and *sādhaka-tattva*, this is rarely considered the cause of a difference between *sampradāyas*. Actually the difference in realisation of *para-tattva* and *upāsya-tattva* is the principal cause of differences between *sampradāyas*. The *upāsya-tattva* has been considered superior in proportion to the degree of excellence exhibited.

Śrī Murāri Gupta is one of Mahāprabhu's internal associates and he is described in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya as an *avatāra* of Hanuman. Although Śrīman Mahāprabhu informed him that Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa has more *mādhurya* (sweetness) than Bhagavān Śrī Ramacandra, Murāri Gupta was not attracted to Kṛṣṇa *bhājana*. His worshipful Deity was Rāma, and he went on worshipping Śrī Rāma until the very end. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was very pleased to see his dedication to his worshipful Lord. Śrīvasa Paṇḍita is also one of the principal associates of Mahāprabhu. His worshipful Deity is Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, and Śrī Karṇapūra has considered him to be an *avatāra* of

Śrī Nārada: It is well known that he personally preferred the worship of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *unnata-ujjala rasa*.

Some ignorant and misguided persons say that there is a difference of opinion between Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī because Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has rejected Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's explanation of the *parakīya-rasa* of the Vraja *gopīs*, and has instead supported *svakīya-rasa*. Actually this accusation is completely unfounded and incorrect. The truth is that Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī supported *svakīya-vāda* for the benefit of some of his followers who had taste for *svakīya-rasa*. His internal consideration was that unqualified persons entering into the transcendently wonderful *parakīya vraja-rasa* should not fall into any adulterous behaviour. It is offensive to consider him an opponent of the transcendental *vraja-rasa*, and he is not considered to be outside the Gauḍīya Sampradāya on account of this simple divergence of views.

We also see differences of opinion among the *ācāryas* of the *māyāvādī* or *kevalādvaita-vādī sampradāya*; the *māyāvādīs* themselves accept this point. However, they are all within the *advaita-vādī* Śankara Sampradāya. Some believe in *vivarta-vāda*, some believe in *bimba-pratibimba-vāda*, some have accepted *avicchinna-vāda*, some admit *ābhāsa-vāda*, and they have refuted each others' opinions. Even so, they are included within the same *sampradāya*. Similarly, although there are some slight mutual differences of opinion between the Śrī Madhva and the Śrī Gauḍīya Sampradāya, it is thoroughly appropriate to accept that the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya follows Madhvācārya.

Bābājī Veśa & Siddha-praṇālī.

In recent times in Bengal and in places such as Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Vṛndāvana in Vraja the custom called *bheka-dhāraṇa* and *siddha-praṇālī* has perverted the intrinsic nature of the *śuddha-bhakti* established by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs. Without consideration of qualification or disqualification, some miscreants give *siddha-praṇālī* and *bābājī veśa* to adulterous fellows, debauchees and ordinary people who are ignorant of *śāstra* and *siddhānta*. Having adopted this base practice, those people then fall to even greater depths of corruption and depravity.

i) *Bheka-dhāraṇa* (the system of *bābājī-veśa*)

From when was the custom of *bheka-dhāraṇa* (the formal acceptance of *bābājī-veśa*) in use? On making an investigation we see that this custom was not current at the time of the Six Gosvāmīs, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrī Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī and so on because these personalities were instinctively *paramahamsas*. Naturally Śrī Sanātāna Gosvāmī, taking an old *dhōṭī* from Tapana Miśra, tore it up and wore it as *bahir-vāsa* and *ḍor-kaupīna* (loin cloth worn by a *paramahamsa*). There is no mention at all of

giving *siddha-praṇālī* (the process in which the spiritual master gives details of the spiritual form, intrinsic mood etc.) in this connection. This dress of a renunciate was adopted simply to indicate a firm dedication to *bhajana*. Similarly, one should understand the case to be the same in regard to the other Gosvāmīs.

In one way, this *bheka-dhāraṇa* is included in category of the *bhikṣuka* (mendicant) *āśrama* or *sannyāsa* because *paramahansa mahātmās* do not have any definite or fixed dress. They are beyond rules, regulations and the distinguishing marks of the *āśramas* such as *sannyāsa*. Since they are always carried away in *bhagavat-prema*, the regulations and prohibitions of scriptures such as the *Vedas* are no impetus for such *paramahansas*. However those people who are not in the *paramahansa* stage accept *vaiṣṇava sannyāsa* according to *sāttvata vaiṣṇava-smṛti* such as *Satkriyāsāra-dīpikā* or according to the same regulations they wear a white outer cloth and *ḍor-kaupīna*. This is for firm dedication to *sādhana-bhajana*, and is called *bheka-dhāraṇa*. The word ‘*bheka*’ is a corrupted form of the Sanskrit word ‘*bheṣa*.’ Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has written in his essay entitled ‘*Bheka-Dhāraṇa*’ (reprinted in *Gauḍīya Patrikā* Year 6, No. 2):

“The word ‘*bheka*’ is properly understood to mean the *āśrama* of *bhikṣuka* (mendicants). The name of the *sannyāsa āśrama* is *bhikṣu-āśrama*. *Sannyāsīs* can never associate with women in this life. They will sustain their lives by the occupation of begging.

“Here a question arises. In which *āśrama* are those Vaiṣṇavas who have accepted *bheka* situated? Our studies of *śāstra* and the instructions of Mahāprabhu establish that detached Vaiṣṇavas are situated in the *bhikṣu-āśrama*. The association of women is completely forbidden for them, so then they are situated in the *sannyāsa āśrama*. The sign of *sannyāsa* is *kaupīna* (loin cloth). If they have accepted *ḍor-kaupīna* or *bahirvāsa* (outer-garment) then they are definitely included in the *sannyāsa āśrama*.

“*Sannyāsa* is of two kinds, ordinary *sannyāsa* and *vaiṣṇava sannyāsa*. There is a vast difference between these two. In ordinary *sannyāsa*

there is peacefulness, self-control, tolerance, renunciation, knowledge of the eternal and the temporary and the ambition to attain Brahman. When these *dharma*s have arisen in an individual, then *sannyāsa* has been accepted. However, the presence of these qualities does not by itself provide eligibility for *vaiṣṇava-sannyāsa*.

The process for developing *rati* for Bhagavān begins first of all with faith in subjects related to Bhagavān. After that one proceeds to *sādhusaṅga*, *bhajana-kriyā*, *anartha-nivṛtti* and so on. At the stage when *rati* for Bhagavān arises in the heart, a *dharma* called *virakti* (detachment) takes shelter of the Vaiṣṇava. At that stage the *vaiṣṇava-sādhaka* becomes completely detached from the *gṛhastha-āśrama*. He then wears *kaupīna* to minimize his personal necessities, and maintains his life by begging. This is called *vaiṣṇava-bheka*. Those who are simple and free from duplicity and who accept *bheka* for the purpose of doing *bhagavat-bhajana* are worthy to receive the prayers of the whole world. This type of acceptance of *bheka* is of two kinds. Some *sādhakas*, after achieving detachment born of *bhāva*, accept *bheka* from a worthy *guru*; and some have put on *ḍor-kaupīna* and *bahirvāsa* themselves. In the *saṃpradāya* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu this custom of *bheka* is extremely pure. Bowing my head with great faith, I repeatedly offer my obeisances to such a tradition.

“However, it is very unfortunate that these days the *bheka-āśrama* is becoming extremely corrupted. The consideration of eligibility has completely disappeared. Some people, who want to wear *bheka* although they are unqualified, have their heads shaven, put on *ḍor-kaupīna* and accept *bheka* whimsically.

“In the present time some perversions have come in the system of *sannyāsa*. What are they?

(1) Some householder Vaiṣṇavas become *bābājīs*, having shaven their heads and put on a *kaupīna*. What can be more injurious than this? Their action is opposed to *śāstra* and to the interests of society. If they are actually detached from material life then they may accept *bheka* in genuine renunciation. Otherwise they will disgrace *vaiṣṇava-dharma*

and in the next life they will also have to taste the fruit of doing so.

(2) There is a terrible and disastrous custom among *bābājīs* of keeping maidservants in their *āśramas*. In some *āśramas* a *bābājī* may even keep his own wife from his previous *āśrama* in the form of a maidservant. These people associate with women on the pretext of service to God and service to *sādhus*.

(3) *Bābājīs* who are actually renounced completely reject the greed for women, wealth, eatables and so on. Nowadays, common people are losing faith in Vaiṣṇavism, because they see that these defects are spreading among supposedly renounced people. The essence of the matter is that those who accept the symbols of renunciation without having developed the genuine detachment which arises from *rati* (love of Bhagavān) are a disturbance in society and a disgrace to *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. Their own downfall and the defamation of *vaiṣṇava-dharma* are both guaranteed when they accept *bheka* before they are qualified to do so."

After Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, a dark age began in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Gauḍīya Sampradāya, during which the current of *śrī rūpānugā-bhakti* became somewhat impaired. Various kinds of speculative malpractices and opinions opposed to *śuddha-bhakti* became mixed in with the true conception. At that time the situation was so dire that the educated and cultured section of society began to hate even the name of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, having witnessed the misbehaviour of its followers. In this way the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya became distanced from the intelligentsia and respected society.

At that time the Seventh Gosvāmī Saccidānanda Bhakti-vinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī appeared. These two personalities brought about a re-revolutionary transformation in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya and restored its lost dignity. To these two *mahā-puruṣas* and their followers goes the entire credit for whatever diffusion of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and *śuddha-bhakti* has taken place among the learned and respectable sector of society, not only in

India but also throughout the world. They have established the Gauḍīya Maṭha preaching centres of *śuddha-bhakti* everywhere; they have published the literatures of *śuddha-bhakti* along with magazines and journals in all of the major languages of the world; and thus in a very short time they have revolutionized the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society.

After the disappearance of Jagadguru Śrīla Prabhupāda these improper practices began to appear openly in all the prominent places of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala and Kṣetra-maṇḍala. These groups of *bābājīs* began to make allegations against Śrīla Prabhupāda and the *śuddha-vaiṣṇavas* under his shelter. They said that Vaiṣṇavas of the Gauḍīya Maṭha are simply *jñānīs* who are ignorant of *rasa-tattva*, and that their acceptance of saffron cloth and *sannyāsa* is not a properly established procedure. Paramārādhyatama Śrīla Gurudeva has refuted these accusations with scriptural evidence and powerful arguments and has preached *śuddha-bhakti* everywhere. For this purpose he had the essays previously written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Jagadguru Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda published again in his *Śrī Gauḍīya-Patrikā* and *Bhāgavat-Patrikā*. He published a literature entitled '*Sahajiyā-dalana*' (destroying the *sahajiyā* theory) and also argued these points in huge assemblies in many places in Vraja-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala and Kṣetra-maṇḍala. As a result of this the opposition party made a case to prosecute him for loss of reputation in a court of law. However in the end they had to beg forgiveness in the same courtroom.

ii) *Siddha-praṇālī*

Siddha-praṇālī is very much misused nowadays in certain places in Vraja-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala and Kṣetra-maṇḍala. Some people are abused and even driven from their homes when their wives pass away. Although they are bereft of *tattva-jñāna* and unaware of *vaidhī-bhakti-sādhana*, they have their heads shaved in the middle of the night, put on *kaupīna* and quickly take *siddha-praṇālī*. These days *siddha-praṇālī* can be obtained very easily by giving half a *rupee*. Just before giving *mantra* a financial contract takes place. These people think,

“There can be no auspiciousness for *sādhakas* until they acquire *siddha-praṇālī*. There is no necessity for *vaidhī-bhakti* *sādhana*, *tattva-jñāna* or *anartha-nivṛtti*. The *rāgānugā-bhakta* should obtain *siddha-praṇālī* before he goes through *anartha-nivṛtti*. In that way he can avoid getting caught in the inconvenience of *vaidhī-bhakti*.” The conception of these people is exactly like thinking that a fruit will grow from a leaf before the appearance of a flower.

About fifty-five years ago, we were performing Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* with Paramārādhyatama Śrīla Gurudeva. Approximately four hundred pilgrims attending the *parikramā* were staying in a large *dharma-śālā* in Mathurā. Gurudeva had made a big feast there, to which all the local *sādhus*, saints and Vaiṣṇavas had been invited. *Bābājīs* who had accepted *bheka* also assembled there in very large numbers. When they came to meet with Śrīla Gurudeva, he became very curious and asked them, “What is the aim and object of your Kṛṣṇa *bhajana*?” They were taken aback when they heard this question, but after thinking about it they said, “By performing Kṛṣṇa *bhajana* we will attain *mukti* and merge into Kṛṣṇa.” When Gurujī heard their answer, he became very sad. On questioning them further, he found that women were also staying in their *āśramas* as maidservants. From that day on, he vowed to reform these malpractices which had spread in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society. I have indicated this before. In spite of being busy in preaching *śuddha-bhakti* throughout his life, he never forgot this matter. A great deal of credit for the improvement and reform of this situation goes to this *mahā-puruṣa*. Here I am presenting whatever views I have heard from him on this subject.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has defined the following sequence which we have to follow in order to enter into the realm of *bhakti*.

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅga 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛtṭiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ*

*athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sadhakānām ayaṁ premnaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramah*

Bhakti flees very far away when the *sādhaka* transgresses this sequence. Therefore it is extremely necessary to execute the first *aṅga* of *sādhana-bhakti*, namely *vaidhī-bhakti* or regulative devotional service, in order to enter the realm of *prema*. *Vaidhī-bhakti* is not directly the cause of the attainment of Kṛṣṇa *prema*. Still, it is necessary to observe the appropriate limbs of *vaidhī-bhakti* in order to enter into *rāga-mārga*. *Vaidhī-bhakti* is established on the steadfast foundation of scriptural evidence and it is endowed with powerful codes of correct behaviour. Moreover, there is no particular difference between the observance of the limbs of *rāgānugā sādhana-bhakti* and *vaidhī-bhakti*. The difference is only in devotion to the observance. Thus the *aṅgas* of *vaidhī-bhakti sādhana* cannot be neglected entirely. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī on the subject of the *prayojana-tattva*, which is Kṛṣṇa *prema*, he said,

*kona bhagye kona jīvera 'śraddhā' yadi haya
 tabe sei jīva 'sādhū-saṅga' ye karaya
 sādhū-saṅga haite haya 'śravaṇa-kīrtana'
 sādhana-bhaktye haya 'sarvānārtha-nivartana'
 anārtha-nivṛtti haile bhaktye 'niṣṭhā' haya
 niṣṭhā haite śravaṇādye 'ruci' upajaya
 ruci haite bhaktye haya 'āsakti pracura
 āsakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty-aṅkura
 sei 'bhāva' gadha haile dhare 'prema'-nāma
 sei prema— 'prayojana' sarvānanda-dhāma*
 (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 23.9-13)

“If by good fortune a *jīva* develops *śraddhā*, he begins to associate with *sādhus*, and in that company he engages in hearing and chanting. By following *sādhana-bhakti* he becomes free from all *anārthas* and advances with firm faith (*niṣṭhā*) whereby *ruci* (taste) awakens for *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and so on. After *ruci*, then *āsakti* (deep attachment) arises, and from abundant *āsakti* the seed of *prīti* (affection) is born in the heart. When that emotion intensifies, it is called *prema*. This *prema* is life’s ultimate goal and the abode of all joy.”

It is quite impossible for one who transgresses this sequence to enter

the realm of *bhakti*. Thus, those who want to enter this domain while neglecting the limbs of *vaidhī sādhana-bhakti* are in all respects unrestrained and outside the conclusions of *śāstra*. They have no relation at all with *śuddha-bhakti*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has also expressed the same opinion.

*vidhi-mārga rata jane svādhīnatā ratna-dāne
rāga-mārga karāna praveśa*

By considering the gradations of *sādhya-vastu* (objectives) we find that the *prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhājī for Kṛṣṇa is the crest-jewel. Furthermore, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has explained that the *sādhya* for the living entities is Rādhā *dāsyā*, service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā imbued with *pāraṅmāya-bhāva*. In order to obtain that *sādhya-vastu*, *sādhana* is necessary.

*sādhya-vastu sādhanā vinā keha nāhi pāya
kṛpā kari kaha rāya pābāra upāya*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8.197)

“The goal of life (*sādhya-vastu*) cannot be achieved unless one accepts the appropriate process (*sādhana*). Now, being merciful upon Me, please explain that means by which this goal can be attained.”

In reply to this Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda says,

*rādhā-kṛṣṇera līlā ei atī gūḍhatara
dāsyā-vātsalyādi-bhāve nā haya gocara*

*sabe eka sakhī-ganera ihāñ ādhikāra
sakhī haite haya ei līlāra viśtāra*

*sakhī vinā ei līlā puṣṭa nāhi haya
sakhī līlā viśtāriyā, sakhī āsvādaya*

*sakhī vinā ei līlāya anyera nāhi gati
sakhī-bhāve ye tāñre kare anugati*

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa kuñja-sevā-sādhya sei pāya
sei sādhyā pāite āra nāhika upāya*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8. 201-205)

“The pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are very confidential and cannot be understood through the mellows of servitude, fraternity or paternal affection. Actually, only the *gopis* have the right to appreciate these transcendental pastimes, and only from them can these pastimes be expanded. Without the *gopis*, these pastimes between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa cannot be nourished. Only by their cooperation are such pastimes broadcast. It is their business to taste the mellows. One cannot enter into these pastimes without the help of the *gopis*. Only one who does *bhajana* in the ecstasy of the *gopis*, following in their footsteps, can engage in the service of Sri Sri Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the groves of Vṛndāvana. Only then can one understand the conjugal love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. There is no other procedure for understanding.”

*ataeva gopī-bhāva kari angikara
ratri-dina cinte rādhā-kṛṣṇera vihara*

*siddha-dehe cinti' kare tahanni sevana
sakhī-bhāve paya rādhā-kṛṣṇera caraṇa*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8. 228-229)

“Therefore one should accept the mood of the *gopīs* in their service. In such a transcendental mood, one should always think of the pastimes of Sri Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. After meditating on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa for a long time in the internally conceived spiritual body, one attains the opportunity to serve the lotus feet of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as one of the Vraja *devīs*.”

Essentially the gist of the matter is that the love-laden *līlā* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa is so confidential and so full of mysteries that it is imperceptible, even for those in moods such as *dāsyā* and *vātsalya*. Only the *sakhīs* are eligible for this. Therefore, no one can attain the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā or the *kuñja-sevā* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala by *sādhana* without accepting the *anugātya* of the *sakhīs*, that is without

being under their guidance. Thus the only means of attaining this supreme *sādhya* is meditation on the *līlās* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa throughout the day and night by the internally conceived *siddha-deha* in the mood of the *sakhīs*. For this reason, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given this instruction in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* in the section on the *sādhana* of *śrī rāgānugā-bhakti*:

*kṛṣṇaṁ smaran janaṁ cāśya preṣṭhaṁ nija samīhitam
tat-tat kathā rataś cāsau kuryād vāsaṁ vraje sadā*

*sevā sādha-ka-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad bhāva lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

*śravaṇotkīrttanādīni vaidhī bhakty uditāni tu
yānyaṅgāni ca tānyatra viññeyāni manīṣibhiḥ*

Here Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has mentioned two types of *sādhana* in *rāgānugā bhakti-sevā*:

*sevā sādha-ka-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad bhāva lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

When there is *lobha*, greed for *rāgātmikā bhakti*, *rāgānugā bhakti* is executed in two ways: in the *sādha-ka-rūpa*, the external body in which one is presently situated, and in the *siddha-rūpa*. Eagerly desiring to attain *rati* for Kṛṣṇa or the *bhāva* (ecstatic sentiments) of one's chosen associates of Kṛṣṇa, one must follow the associates of Vrajaloka such as Lalitā, Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī and their followers such as Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. One must render bodily service with the *sādha-ka-rūpa* following the great authorities residing in Vraja such as Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. And with the *siddha-rūpa* one must render *mānasī-sevā* following the *vrajavāsīs* such as Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and others. The meaning of the above verse has been given in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in this way.

*bāhya, antara — ihāra dui ta' sādha-
'bāhye' sādha-ka-dehe kare śravaṇa-kīrtana*

*'mane' nija-siddha-deha kariyā bhāvana
rātri-dīne kare vraje kṛṣṇera sevana*

(Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya, 22.156-157)

"This *rāgānuga bhakti* is performed in two ways: externally and internally. Externally, in the *sādhaka* body, the devotee engages in hearing and chanting. In his mind, in his internally conceived, perfected, spiritual body he serves Kṛṣṇa in Vraja day and night."

Thus *rāgānugā-bhakti sādhakas* should in all respects practise *bhāva-sambandhi sādhana* such as *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, service to *tulasī*, wearing *tilaka*, observing vows beginning with Śrī Ekādaśī and Janmāṣṭamī and so on, for all these activities nourish one's own desired *bhāva*. Simultaneously one must also render service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, meditating on one's *siddha-deha* in the heart. The body of a *gopī* which is suitable for rendering service to Rādhā-Govinda is called *siddha-deha*. When the *bhajana* is complete, the *jīva* gives up the inert material body, and attains the body of a *gopī* corresponding to its eternal intrinsic form.

Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura has said,

*sādhane bhāvibe jāhū siddha-dehe pābe tāhā
rāga-pathera ei se upāya*

(Śrī Prema Bhakti-candrika 5.8)

"Whatever subject is constantly meditated upon at the time of performing *sādhana*, that same subject is the prominent meditation at the time of death and it engrosses the *citta* (heart)."

One's destination at the time of death will exactly correspond to the subject one remembers at that time. Rājārṣi Bharata attained the body of a deer at the time of death, so what doubt is there about attaining the body suitable for rendering to the Divine Couple the service on which one constantly reflected in one's internally conceived *siddha-deha*?

In relation to the *siddha-deha* it has been said in the *Sanat-Kumāra Samhitā*,

*ātmānam cintayet tatra tāsām madhye manoramām
rūpayauvanasampannām kiśorīm premodākr̥tim*

*rādhikānucarī nityam tat sevana parāyaṇām
kṛṣṇād apy adhikam prema rādhikāyām prakurvātīm*

Sadāśiva is giving instruction to Nāradaḥ on the subject of *siddha-deha* suitable for rendering service to the Divine Couple. "O Nārada! Meditate in this way upon your own *svarūpa* among Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved associates who take pride in being His paramours in the *aprākṛta* Vṛndāvana Dhāma. 'I am an extremely lovely and supremely blissful *kiśorī* (adolescent girl), endowed with youthful beauty. I am an eternal maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Having arranged for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearest mistress Śrīmatī Rādhikā to meet with Him, I will always make them both happy. Therefore I am the maidservant of Rādhikā, the most beloved of Kṛṣṇa. Remaining always and forever engaged in the service of the Divine Couple, may I maintain more love for Śrīmatī than for Kṛṣṇa.'"

Now we should note that the descriptions of *siddha-deha* that *śāstra* and the *mahājanas* have given are for *sādhakas* of a particular level. Wherever *siddha-deha* has been mentioned it has been shown in the context of *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Specifically such instructions are intended for those very fortunate *sādhakas* in whose hearts *lobha*, a genuine greed to attain *rāgātmikā-bhakti*, has already arisen due to *saṁskāras* (impressions) from this life and previous lives.

Here is a further matter which is worthy of consideration. It is one thing to understand the excellence of some particular *rasa* by the discrimination given in *śāstra*. It is another thing altogether to have *lobha* for that *rasa*. When someone has *lobha* in a particular *rasa*, then the symptoms of *lobha* will also be evident in that *sādhaka*. When *lobha* arises, *rāgānugā-bhakti sādhana* begins from the stage of *ruci*. It will be understood from this that the *nāmāparādha*, *sevāparādha* and

various other *anarthas* of a *sādhaka* have, for the most part, already gone far away. He has already controlled the six urges mentioned by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* (Verse 1); he is virtually free from the six faults (Verse 2); he is endowed with the six qualities beginning with *utsāhān niścayāt* (enthusiasm and confidence) (Verse 3); having recognized the three types of Vaiṣṇavas, he is expert in behaving appropriately with them (Verse 5); and he has also become established in the purport of the verse beginning *tan nāma rūpa caritādi* (Verse 8). In other words he conducts himself according to this verse.

In this stage the *sādhaka* goes on performing *bhajana*, and when he crosses the stage of *ruci* and enters the stage of *āsakti* then a semblance of the symptoms related by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in the verse *kṣāntir-avyartha-kālatvaṁ* will be observed in him. In the stage of *āsakti*, a semblance (*ābhāsa*) of the *rati* which arises in the stage of *bhāva* will appear, and in order to make that *rati* manifest fully, the *sādhaka* will perform *bhajana* meditating on his *siddha-deha*. When this *ratyābhāsa* transforms into *rati* by the practice of *bhajana*, then the *sādhaka* attains factual experience of his own *svarūpa*. This is called meditation on *siddha-deha*, or the acceptance of *vaiṣṇava-bheka*. One who is endowed with simplicity and who has *lobha* for this is worshipful for the whole world.

There are two types of acceptance of *bheka*. A *sādhaka* may receive *bheka* from some suitable *guru*; alternatively, when genuine *vairāgya* arises as mentioned previously, he may accept *bheka* from himself. Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the Six Gosvāmīs, Lokanātha Gosvāmī and others are examples of the practice of accepting *bheka* from oneself. This is also the way that Śrīla Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura accepted *sannyāsa veśa* after the disappearance of Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī from whom he had received *dīkṣā-mantra*. We see from these examples that acceptance of *bheka* in this way is fully in agreement with *śāstra*. Śrī Rāmānujācārya also accepted *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa* from himself after the disappearance of his *guru* Śrīla Yamunācārya.

In any case, the meditation on one's *siddha-deha* depends on the mercy of one's *guru*. The *guru* or *śikṣā-guru* who is established in *rasa-vicāra*

and who is a *svarūpa-siddha* will indicate the details of the *sādhaka*'s perfected form. Otherwise, if the *sādhaka* changes the order of the sequence described above, he cannot attain perfection. On the contrary, his *bhakti* may become completely ruined and the conceptions of the *sampradāya* will also become corrupted. We see this going on everywhere nowadays.

Some ignorant people say that there is no *siddha-praṇālī* in the Gaudīya Maṭha. This vicious propaganda is erroneous in all respects. In the authentic literature written by Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī entitled *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* and *Samśkāra-dīpikā*, which is a supplement to *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, there is an account of the *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa samśkāra*. The original manuscript handwritten by Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī is protected even today in the Royal Library of Jaipur. An old copy of this same literature is also kept to this day by the Gosvāmīs of Śrī Rādhā-Ramana. Therefore this literature is authoritative evidence. According to *Samśkāra-dīpikā*, *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa veśa* is given among Gaudīyas. In this *sannyāsa samśkāra*, *ḍor-kaupīna*, *bahir-vāsa* and the *sannyāsa-mantrā* for taking shelter of *gopī-bhāva* are also given. The *eka-daśa-bhāva* (eleven aspects of *gopī-bhāva*), namely *sambandha*, *vayaḥ*, *nāma*, *rūpa*, *yūtha*, *veśa*, *ājñā*, *vāsa*, *sevā*, *parākāṣṭhāśvāsa* and *pālya-dāsī-bhāva*, are contained within this *gopī-bhāva*. The identity of the *siddha-deha* is determined by the instructions of Śrī Guru in accordance with the *ruci* of the *sādhaka*. One's own *nāma*, *rūpa*, *vayasa*, *veśa*, *sambandha*, *yūtha*, *ājñā*, *vāsa*, *parākāṣṭhāśvāsa* and *pālya-dāsī bhāva* given by guru is called *siddha-praṇālī*. As the *sādhaka* goes on performing this type of *sādhana*, the perfection of his *svarūpa* takes place along with the attainment of *śuddha-rati* in his heart.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has described his *siddha-svarūpa* in this way.

varaṇe taḍit vāsa tārāvalī
 kamala mañjarī nāma
 sāḍe bāru varṣa vayasa satata
 svānanda sukhada dhāma

karpūra sevā lalitāra gaṇa
rādhā yūtheśvarī hana
mameśvarī-nātha śrī nanda-nandana
āmāra parāṇa dhana

śrī rūpa mañjarī prabhṛtira sama
yugala sevāya āśa
avaśya se-rūpa sevā pāba āmi
parākāṣṭhā suviśvāsa

kabe vā e dāsī saṁsiddhi labhibe
rādhā-kunḍe vāsa kari'
rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā satata karibe
pūrva smṛti parihari'

“My complexion is like a flash of lightning and my dress is bedecked with twinkling stars. My name is Kamala Mañjarī and I am eternally twelve-and-a-half years old. My abode is Svānanda Sukhada Kuñja. My service is to supply camphor to Śrī Yugala. I serve in the *gaṇa* of Lalitā and Śrī Rādhā is my *yūtheśvarī*. The Beloved of my Svāminī, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, is the treasure of my life. I aspire to serve Śrī Yugala like Rūpa Mañjarī and others, and I am confident that I will surely attain this service. This is my highest aspiration. Oh, when will this maidservant attain complete perfection and, residing at Śrī Rādhā-kunḍa, serve Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in complete forgetfulness of my past?”

In conclusion, whatever custom of accepting *bheka* is seen among *bābājīs* is not a fifth *āśrama*, rather it is a second form of the fourth *āśrama*, namely the *sannyāsa āśrama*.



Śrī Ācārya Kesarī's first *samnyāsī* disciples
Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama

The Eligibility to Hear Rāsa-līlā Kathā.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is a direct manifestation of the Supreme Lord. It is an ambrosial, overflowing ocean of supremely sweet nectarean love (*prema-rasa*) for Svayaṁ Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the personification of divine *rasa*. *Rasika* and *bhāvuka bhaktas* always drown in this ocean. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the fully ripened, nectarean fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literature which comprises the entirety of Indian thought. Within *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *gopī-prema* has been ascertained to be the ultimate objective.

A few towering waves of *gopī-prema* can be seen from the *Veṇu-gīta* portion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Rasika bhaktas* drown themselves in these waves and even lose all consciousness of their own bodies. Greed to be immersed in this nectarean ocean sprouts even in the hearts of the faithful devotees who are situated on the shore of this ocean.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined form of *rasarāja* and *mahābhāva*, resplendent with the sentiment and bodily complexion of Śrī Rādhā, relished the nectar of *Veṇu-gīta* with Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda in Śrī Gambhīrā. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī collected a few drops of this nectar in their

commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* entitled *Bṛhad-vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī* and *Laghu-vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī* respectively. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, through his commentary named *Sārārtha Darśinī*, has distributed to the whole world the same nectar in the form of the remnants of their *mahāprasāda*.

Some persons believe that unqualified *sādhakas* are ineligible to hear, chant or remember the topics of *Śrī Veṇu-gīta*, *Śrī Rāsa-pañcādhya*, *Yugala-gīta*, *Brahmara-gīta* and so on, as described in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This consideration is fully legitimate. But according to their conception, only a *sādhaka* who has conquered the six urges (*kāma*, *krodha*, etc.), who is free from all *anarthas* and fully purified from the heart disease of lust, is eligible to hear such topics, while all others have no right. We will now examine this topic in greater detail.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who established and fulfilled the inner heart's desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, composed *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī* and other sacred texts. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī composed *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. While writing, they were deeply concerned that these confidential texts on *rasa* should not fall into the hands of unqualified persons. If this should occur, it may present a great disturbance to the world. A glimpse of this topic is found in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Cc. Ādi 4.231), as stated by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī:

*e saba siddhānta gūḍha,—kahite nā yuyāya
nā kahile, keha ihāra anta nāhi pāya*

*ataeva kahi kichu kariṇā nigūḍha
bujhibe rasika bhakta, nā bujhibe mūḍha*

*hṛdaye dharaye ye caitanya-nityānanda
e-saba siddhānte sei pāibe ānanda*

*e saba siddhānta haya āmrera pallava
bhakta-gaṇa-kokilera sarvadā vallabha*

*abhakta-uṣṭrera ithe nā haya praveśa
tabe citte haya mora ānanda-viśeṣa*

*ye lāgi kahite bhaya, se yadi nā jāne
ihā vai kibā sukha āche tribhuvane*

*ataeva bhakta-gaṇe kari nāmaskāra
niḥśaṅke kahiye, tāra hauk camatkāra*

“The esoteric and confidential conclusions regarding the amorous pastimes of *rasarāja* Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with the gopīs, who are the embodiments of *mahābhāva*, are not fit to be disclosed to the common ordinary man. But without revealing them, no one can enter into this topic. I shall, therefore, describe these topics in a concealed manner so that only *rasika bhaktas* will be able to understand, whereas ineligible fools will not.

“Anyone who has established Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu in their hearts will attain transcendental bliss by hearing all these conclusions. This entire doctrine is as sweet as newly grown mango sprouts, which can be relished only by the devotees who are likened to cuckoo birds. For the camel-like non-devotees, there is no possibility of admittance into these topics. Therefore, there is special jubilation in my heart.

“If those whom I fear are themselves unable to comprehend these topics, then what could be a greater source of happiness in all the three worlds? Therefore, after offering obeisances to the devotees, I am revealing this subject without any hesitation.”

By reading and hearing these topics, everyone can attain the highest benefit. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has clarified this topic by quoting the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.36):

*anugrahāya bhaktānām mānuṣām deham āśritāḥ
bhajate tādṛśīḥ krīḍā yāḥ śrutvā tatparo bhavet*

“In order to bestow mercy upon the devotees as well as the conditioned souls, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests His human-like form and performs such extraordinary pastimes (*rāsa-līlā*) that anyone who hears them becomes exclusively devoted unto Him.” (quoted in *Cc. Ādi* 4.34)

Here Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja points out that the verb *bhavet* in the above verse is in the imperative mood. This means it is compulsory for the *jīvas* to hear such pastimes, as explained in the following *śloka* from *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 4.35):

*'bhavet' kriyā vidhiliṅ, sei ihā kaya
kārtavya avaśya ei, anyathā pratyavāya*

“In the above verse *bhavet* is in the imperative mood. Therefore, this certainly must be done. To not do so would be a discrepancy.”

For the information of the reader, I am referring here to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* commentary on the above quoted *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse (10.33.36).

*tatra loke'dhiṣṭhāṛtvena kṛṣṇākhyā narākāra parabrahmaṇaḥ śrī
gopair anubhūtatvāt evaṁ bhaktānugrahārthaṁ tat krīḍety abhipretam.
āptakāma iva 'pi bhaktānugraho yujuate. viśuddha sattvasya tathā
svabhāvāt. yad bhāva bhāvite cānyatra dṛśyate 'sau. tathā
rahugaṇānugrāhake śrī jaḍa bharata carite, yathā vā bhagavad
anugrāhake mayīti ca. tatra bhakta śabdena braja devyo braja janāś
ca sarve kāla-traya sambandhino 'nye ca vaiṣṇavā grhītām—braja
devīnām pūrva-rāgādibhir braja janānām janmādibhir anyeṣāṁ ca
bhakta darśana śravaṇādibhir apūrvatva sphuraṇāt. ataeva tādṛṣa
bhakta prasaṅgena tādṛṣīḥ sarva cittākāṣṇīnīḥ krīḍā bhajate, yāḥ
sādharaṇīr api śrutvā bhaktebho 'nyo 'pi janas tatparo bhavet. kimuta
rāsa līlā rūpām imām śrutvety arthaḥ. vakṣyate ca—vikrīḍitām vraja-
vadhūbhir idaṁ ca viṣṇoḥ (SB 10.33.39) ityādi. yad vā, mānuṣaṁ deham
āśritāḥ sarvo 'pi jīvas tatparo bhavet, martya loke śrī bhagavad avatārāt
tathā bhajane mukhyatvāc ca manuṣyānām eva sukhena tac chravaṇādi
siddeḥ. bhūtānām iti pāṭhe nijāvatāra kāraṇa bhakta sambandhena
sarveṣāṁ eva janānām viṣayīnām mumukṣuṇām muktānāṁ cety arthaḥ.
iti parama kārūṇyam eva kāraṇam uktam. tathāpi bhajana
sambandhenaiva sarvānugraho jñeyah. anyattaiḥ. tatra*

bahirmukhānapīti tatparyantatvaṁ vivakṣitam, parama prema parākāṣṭhā mayatayā śrī śukasyāpi tad varṇanātiśaya pravṛtteḥ gopīnām ity asyārthāntare tv evaṁ vyākhyeyam.

The words *anugrahāya bhaktānām mānuṣaṁ dehaṁ āśritaḥ* indicate that the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears in His original human-like form and performs various pastimes in order to bestow favor upon His devotees. Therefore, although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is satisfied in Himself (*āptakāma*), His display of kindness toward the devotees is quite appropriate. This is the distinctive characteristic of *viśuddha-sattva* (pure goodness). The Lord is always prepared to reward the devotees with a result consistent with their performance of *bhajana*. The favor shown toward King Rahugaṇa by Śrī Jaḍa Bharata and the Lord's favor toward Śukadeva Gosvāmī illustrates this.

In the verse under discussion, it is said that the Lord manifests His form and pastimes in order to bestow favor upon His devotees. The word *bhakta* used here refers to the Vraja-devīs (the *gopīs*), the Vrajavāsīs (residents of Vraja) and all other Vaiṣṇavas—past, present and future. In order to bestow favor upon the *vraja-devīs*, Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa lovingly executes such pastimes as *pūrva-rāga* (the attachment in anticipation of meeting Kṛṣṇa prior to their union). To bestow mercy upon all the residents of Vraja, He enacts His birth and other pastimes, and by all His activities, He bestows favor upon past, present and future devotees through the medium of hearing *līlā-kathā*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests all these pastimes to benefit the devotees. By so doing, even ordinary persons (other than the devotees) who hear even the more common of the Lord's pastimes become fully intent upon the Lord. Therefore, by hearing the supremely ambrosial *rāsa-līlā*, ordinary persons will certainly become exclusively devoted to the Lord—of this there can be no doubt. This fact will be elaborately discussed in subsequent verses such as *vikṛīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ* (SB 10.33.39)

The words *mānuṣaṁ deham āśritaḥ* may also indicate that those *jīvas* who have attained the human form of life are able to hear all these pastimes, and thus they become exclusively devoted to the Supreme Lord. This is so because the Lord incarnates exclusively on the earthly planets (*martya-loka*), and it is here only that worship of the Lord takes on its predominant form. Consequently, the human beings residing on the earthly planets may easily hear these narrations of the Lord's pastimes.

The word *bhaktānām* appears in this verse. But in some other editions, the word *bhūtānām* is found in its place. In that case, the purport would be as follows: the Lord incarnates only for the sake of the devotees. As a result, the devotees are the root cause of the Lord's appearance. The Lord also appears in His original human-like form in order to bestow His favor upon the liberated souls (*muktas*), the aspirants for liberation (*mumukṣus*), sense enjoyers (*viṣayīs*), and all living entities in accordance with their relationship with the devotees. The Lord's compassion is therefore said to be the cause of His appearance. Nevertheless, it must be understood that the Lord's favor toward other living entities is due only to their relationship with His devotees. In other words, the Lord bestows favor upon *jīvas* only because of their connection with devotees.

In his *Bhāgavatam* commentary known as *Bhāvārtha-dīpikā*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has written that, what to speak of the devotees, even materialistic persons are freed from their material absorption by hearing the Lord's pastimes, and thus they become exclusively fixed upon Him. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura explains this verse in his commentary known as *Sārārtha Darśinī*:

bhaktānām anugrahāya tādrśīḥ krīdāḥ bhajate yāḥ śrutvā mānuṣaṁ deham āśritaḥ jīvaḥ tatparas tad viṣayakaḥ śraddhāvān bhaved iti krīdāntar ato vailakṣaṇyena madhura rasamayāḥ asyāḥ krīdāyās tādrśī maṇi-mantra-mahauṣadhānām iva kācid atarkyā śaktir astity avagamyate

“The Lord performs varieties of pastimes to show favor to His devotees. Having adopted the human form of life, living entities who hear these pastimes become exclusively devoted unto the Lord. In other words, they develop firm faith in hearing the narrations of the Lord’s activities. What more shall I say about the importance of hearing *līlā-kathā*? And this *rāsa-līlā*, being fully imbued with *mādhurya-rasa*, is eminently distinguished even from the Lord’s other pastimes. Like a jewel, a *mantra* or a powerful medicine, this *rāsa-līlā* is endowed with such indisputable, astonishing potency that by hearing it, all persons in the human form become devoted to the Supreme Lord. Therefore, all varieties of devotees who hear the descriptions of these pastimes will become successful and obtain supreme pleasure. Can there be any question of doubt in this regard?”

In this context, we may cite verse 10.33.30 from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*naitat samācarej jātu manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ
vinaśyaty ācāran mauḍhyād yathārudro ‘bdhijam viṣam*

“In other words, those who are not *īśvara*, the Supreme Lord, who are powerless and subjected to *karma*, should never imitate the Lord’s pastimes even within their minds. If anyone foolishly imitates Lord Śiva by drinking the poison generated from the ocean, he will certainly be destroyed.”

The gist of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s commentaries on this verse is that living entities who are subservient to the material body and who are *anīśvara*—bereft of the controlling potency of the Supreme Lord—should never behave in such a way even within their minds. What to speak of actually performing such activities, one should not even desire to do so. In other words, such acts performed by God in transgression of religious codes should not be contemplated even within the mind.

The word *samācaraṇa* (behavior), when divided into its constituent parts (*samyak* and *ācaraṇa*), indicates complete behavior. Here it has been used to indicate total prohibition of such activity. Therefore, the

purport is that such behavior should not be adopted even to the slightest extent. What to speak of performing such activities through speech or the senses, one should not even mentally conceive of such activities.

The word *hi* indicates that this certainly must *not* be done. If one were to behave in that way, he would be completely destroyed. The significance of the word *maudhyād* (stupidity) is that if anyone, being ignorant of the Lord's omnipotence and his own incompetence, foolishly adopts such behavior, he will be utterly ruined. Just as if anyone other than Lord Śiva were to foolishly consume deadly poison, instantaneously he would be destroyed. But Lord Śiva, in spite of drinking poison, is not destroyed; to the contrary, he attains even greater fame and splendor as Nīla-kaṇṭha, he whose throat turned blue from drinking poison.

Here in this verse, imitation of such behavior has been prohibited, yet in the verse to come (*SB 10.33.36*)—*yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet*—it is evident that not only devotees but even others who faithfully hear these pastimes will become fully devoted to the Supreme Lord. This has been further explained in the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*10.33.39*):

*vikrīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ
śraddhānvīto 'nuśṛṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ
bhaktiṁ parāṁ bhagavati pratilabhya kāmam
hrd-rogam āśv apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*

“A sober person who in the beginning faithfully and continuously hears from his *guru* the narrations of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's unprecedented *rāsa* dance with the young wives (*gopīs*) of Vraja, and later describes those pastimes, very soon attains *parā-bhakti* or *prema-bhakti* for the Supreme Lord, and thus becomes competent to quickly dispel the heart disease of lust.”

Here Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments in *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*:

śraddhayaḥ viśvāsenānvita itī. tad viparītāvajñā-rupāparādha-nivṛty arthaṇca nairantaryārthaṇca. tac ca phala vaiśiṣṭyārtham, ataeva yo 'nu niranantaraṁ śṛṇuyāt, athānantaraṁ svayaṁ varṇayec ca, upalakṣaṇaṁ caitat smarec ca, bhaktiṁ prema-lakṣaṇaṁ parāṁ śrī gopikā premānusāritvāt sarvottama jātīyāṁ; pratikṣaṇaṁ nūtanatvena labdhā; hṛd-roga-rūpaṁ kāmam itī bhagavad viśayaḥ kāma viśeṣo vyavacchinnaḥ, tasya parama prema rūpatvena tad vaiḍiparītyāt, kāmam itī upalakṣaṇam anyeṣāṁ api hṛd-rogaṇām. anyatra śrūyate (śrī gītā, 18.54)—"brahma bhūtaḥ prasannātma na śocati na kāṅkṣati, samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu mad bhaktiṁ labhate parāṁ." itī atra ty hṛd-rogaṇpahānāt pūrvam eva parama bhaktiḥ praptiḥ tasmāt parama balavadevedaṁ sādhanam itī bhāvyaḥ.

Having concluded the narration of the *rāsa-līlā*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī became deeply immersed in spiritual ecstasy. In this verse, he describes the fruits of hearing and chanting the *rāsa-līlā* and thus benedicts all future listeners and reciters. Those who incessantly and faithfully hear Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā* with the young wives of Vraja, and later recite those pastimes, quickly attain *parā-bhakti* toward Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus relinquish the heart disease of lust.

Śraddhānvita means to hear with firm faith. This word has been used to prevent the offense which results from mistrust (*aviśvasa*) or disregard (*avaññā*) of the statements of *śāstra*—in complete opposition to the principle of hearing with faith. It has also been used to promote constant hearing. By this word, the importance of hearing has been pointed out. The words *atha varṇayed* indicate that after continuously hearing the *rāsa-līlā* along with other special pastimes, one will personally describe those pastimes. By *upalakṣaṇa*, that is, indirect implication, it is further indicated that after hearing and reciting, one will also remember those pastimes and take great delight in them. In other words, hearing, chanting, remembering, experiencing delight, and so on are all implied by the words *śraddhānvitaḥ anuśṛṇuyāt atha varṇayed* (to hear repeatedly with faith and then describe).

Parā-bhakti means *bhakti* which follows in the wake of the *gopīs* of Vraja. Therefore, the *bhakti* referred to here is *prema-bhakti* of the highest category. The word *pratilabhya* (repeatedly obtained), together with the word *parā-bhakti*, indicates that first *parā-bhakti* (possessing the distinctive characteristics of *prema*) is obtained within the heart at every moment in ever-new varieties. Thereafter one quickly gives up the heart disease of lust.

Here the difference between *kāma* (material lust) as a disease of the heart and *kāma* (spiritual love) in relationship to the Supreme Lord is pointed out. These two are distinct from each other. The word *kāma* here indirectly implies that all diseases of the heart will quickly be dispelled.

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54) it is said: “One who is situated in the transcendental position beyond the contamination of the three modes of nature (*brahma-bhūta*), who is fully satisfied in the self, who neither laments nor hankers for anything, and who looks impartially upon all living beings, attains *parā-bhakti* unto Me.”

In this *Gītā* verse it is said that one attains *parā-bhakti* only after the disappearance of the diseases of the heart, but in the above verse it is said that one attains *parā-bhakti* even before their departure. Consequently, it is understood that hearing and chanting of *rāsa-līlā* is one of the most powerful forms of *sādhana*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura states as follows in his *Sārārtha Darśinī* commentary on the same verse (10.33.39):

anudinam vā śrṇuyāt. atha varṇayet kīrttayet. svakavīṭayā kāvyā-rūpatvena nibadhnūtetī vā. parām prema lakṣaṇām prāpyeti ktvā pratyayena hṛd-rogaṇy apy adhikāriṇi pratham ataeva premṇaḥ praveśas tatas tat prabhāvenaivācirato hṛd roga nāśa iti premāyaṁ jñāna yoga iva na durbaḷaḥ paratantraś cetī bhāvaḥ. hṛd roga nāśa iti premāyaṁ jñāna yoga iva na durbaḷaḥ paratantraś cetī bhāvaḥ. hṛd-roga-rūpaṁ kāmaṁ iti bhagavad viśayakaḥ kāma viśeṣo vyavacchinnaḥ tasya premāmṛta rūpatvena tad vaiṇarītyāt. dhīraḥ paṇḍita itī hṛd roge

satyapi katham premā bhaved ity anāstikya lakṣaṇena mūrkhātvena rahita ity arthaḥ. ataeva śraddhānvita iti śāstrāviśvāsinām nāmāparādhinām premāpi nāṅgīkarotīti bhāvaḥ.

The prefix *anu* (repeatedly or methodically) when applied to *śṛṇuyāt* (to hear) indicates constant hearing. By continuously hearing from the lips of the *śravaṇa-guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, and thereafter reciting, narrating, or describing (those pastimes) in poetry of one's own composition, one attains *parā-bhakti*—or in other words *bhakti* which is of the nature of *prema* (*prema-lakṣaṇa-bhakti*).

The suffix *ktvā* has been used in the formation of the verb *pratilabhya* (obtained) as follows: *prati + labh + ktvā*. According to the rules of Sanskrit grammar, when the suffix *ktvā* is applied to a verbal root with a prefix, it is replaced by *yap*. Then the letter 'p' is dropped and thus the final form of the word '*pratilabhya*' is obtained. The suffix *ktvā* is applied to the first of two verbs performed by the same agent to show successive action (i.e., having attained *prema*, he relinquishes all lusty desires of the heart). In this case, the first action is *pratilabhya* (the attainment of *prema*) and the second action is *apahinoti* (renunciation of the lusty desires of the heart).

Therefore, the suffix *ktvā* in the verb *pratilabhya* indicates that although lust and other evils still remain within the heart, *prema-bhakti* first enters the heart and by its extraordinary influence destroys all vices to the root. In other words, hearing and reciting *rāsa-līlā* possesses such astonishing power that the lust in the heart of the faithful *sādhaka* is destroyed and he attains *prema*. Though these two take place simultaneously, the influence of *prema* manifests first, and through its effect, all lusty desires of the heart are dissipated.

Thus, as a result of hearing and chanting the narrations of the Lord's pastimes, one first attains *prema* for the Lord's lotus feet and thereafter one's heart is liberated from lusty desires and all other contamination. In other words, he becomes perfectly pure because *prema* is not feeble like the processes of *jñāna* and *yoga*. *Bhakti* is omnipotent and supremely independent.

The words *hṛd-roga-kāma* indicate the difference between lusty desires of the heart and the *kāma* in relationship to the Supreme Lord. *Kāma* which is in relationship to the Supreme Lord is of the very nature of the nectar of *prema* (*premamṛta svarūpa*), whereas the lusty desires of the heart are exactly the opposite. Therefore, these two attitudes are distinct from each other. This is substantiated by use of the words *hṛd-roga kāma*.

The word *dhīra* means a *paṇḍita*, or one who is learned in the *śāstra*. One who refuses to accept the claim of this verse and thinks, "As long as the disease of lust remains in the heart, *prema* cannot be obtained," is said to possess an atheistic temperament. One who is free from such a foolish, atheistic demeanor is known as a *paṇḍita* or sober person (*dhīra*). Consequently, only those who have firm faith in the *śāstra* are known as *dhīra*. Those who have no faith in the statements of the *śāstras* are atheistic and offenders to the holy name. Such persons can never attain *prema*.

Consequently, in the heart of the *sādhakas* who firmly believe in the statements of the *śāstra*, faith arises by hearing *rāsa-līlā* and other narrations. Only in the hearts of such faithful devotees does *prema* manifest its influence as a result of hearing *līlā-kathā*. Thereafter, lust and all evils present within the heart of the devotees are destroyed to the root.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on *Śrīmād-Bhāgavatam* (10.47.59) is also relevant to this discussion. There it is stated that *bhakti* is the only cause of superior qualities being found in any individual. Austerities, learning, knowledge, and so on are not the cause of superior qualities. Although *bhakti* is itself of the highest excellence, it does not appear only in the most exceptional individuals endowed with all good qualities. On the contrary, it may manifest or remain even in the most condemned and vile persons. Furthermore, it causes thoroughly wretched and fallen persons to attain all good qualities, to become worthy of the respect of all, and to attain the highest and most rare association.

For this reason, the opinion that Bhakti-devī enters the heart only after all *anarthas*, *aparādhas*, lust, and other diseases of the heart have been eradicated, is not appropriate. On the contrary, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord or the devotees, or by faithfully executing *sādhana* and *bhajana*, this rare *bhakti* enters the heart first, and then all *anarthas* are automatically dissipated—this condition is thoroughly agreeable.

Therefore, only faithful *sādhakas* with firm belief in the statements of *śāstra*, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas are eligible to hear the *līlā-kathā* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* which are saturated with *rasa*. And conversely, those who believe that only *sādhakas* who are completely free from all *anarthas* are eligible to hear the above-mentioned pastimes, will neither become free from *anarthas* nor obtain eligibility to hear—even after millions of births.

Another point to consider is that if this argument is accepted, then we *sādhakas* who are still affected by *anarthas*, although possessing faith, could never read nor hear the sacred books of *rasika* Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* like Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Under such a circumstance, we would be forever deprived of the extremely confidential and elevated truths of *bhakti* expressed by these *ācāryas*. There would be no possibility that the sprout of greed for *rāgānugā-bhakti* would ever be awakened in our hearts. Thus we would be forever cheated from that which was not previously given, the *prema-rasa* of the most munificent Śrī Śacī-nandana, the bestower of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. What then would distinguish the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas who have taken shelter of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu from Vaiṣṇavas of other *sampradāyas*?

A third point to consider is this. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.70) the following verse is quoted from *Padyāvalī*:

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto'pi labhyate*

tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate

Here, the words *laulyam api mūlyam ekalam* (indeed the only price is greed) indicate that this supremely rare greed cannot be aroused even by pious activities accumulated over millions and millions of births. Then how can this greed be obtained? The words *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ* indicate one whose intelligence or perception has been awakened toward *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa*. Here, the implication is that by faithfully hearing the narrations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes saturated with *rasa* from the lips of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas in whom *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa* has arisen, or by faithfully and attentively studying the literatures related to the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa composed by them, this greed may be obtained. Besides this, there is no other means.

Another argument, that at present there is no *sādhaka* who is completely free from *anarthas* and, therefore, no one is eligible, nor in the future will anyone be eligible, is completely illogical. Freedom from lust and all other *anarthas* in and of itself is not the qualification for entrance into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. On the contrary, greed awakened towards the Lord's *mādhurya* (sweetness) is the sole qualification for entrance into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. Nor is there any certainty that, by routine observance of the limbs of *vaidhī-bhakti* alone, greed toward *rāgānugā-bhakti* will automatically awaken. There is no evidence of this anywhere. Therefore, our highest obligation is to follow the purport of the commentaries of the previous *ācāryas* to the above-mentioned verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

It is by the inspiration of His Divine Grace Śrīla Guru-pāda-padma *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the repeated solicitation of many bumblebee-like devotees that I am presenting *Śrī Venu-gīta* to the readers along with a purport to the commentaries of Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī named *Sārārtha Darśinī* and *Śrī Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇi* respectively. By reading this subject with full faith, the greed to enter into *rāgānugā-bhakti* will certainly sprout in the hearts of the faithful devotees. This itself is the very purpose of human life.

ŚRĪ GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA SAMITI

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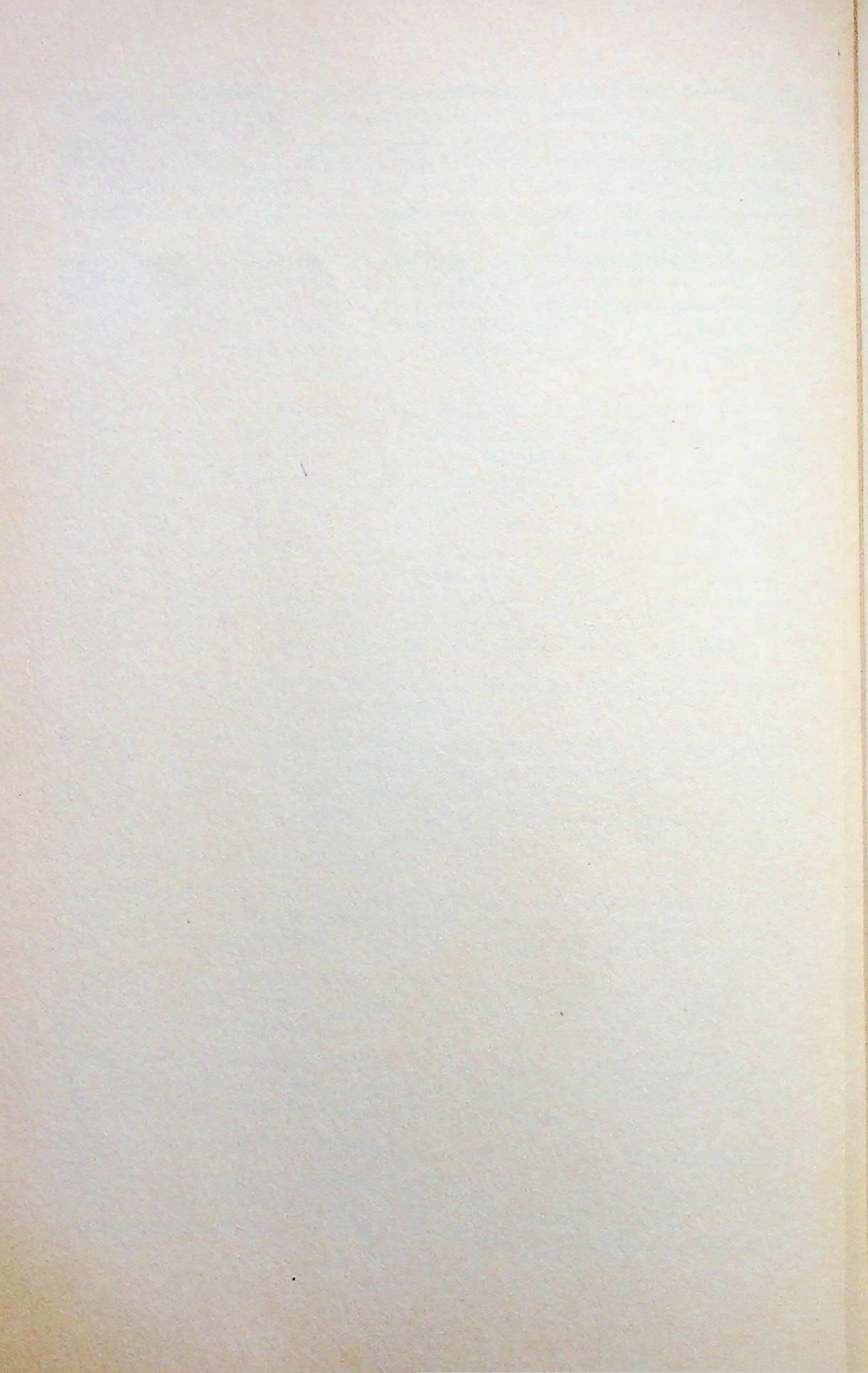
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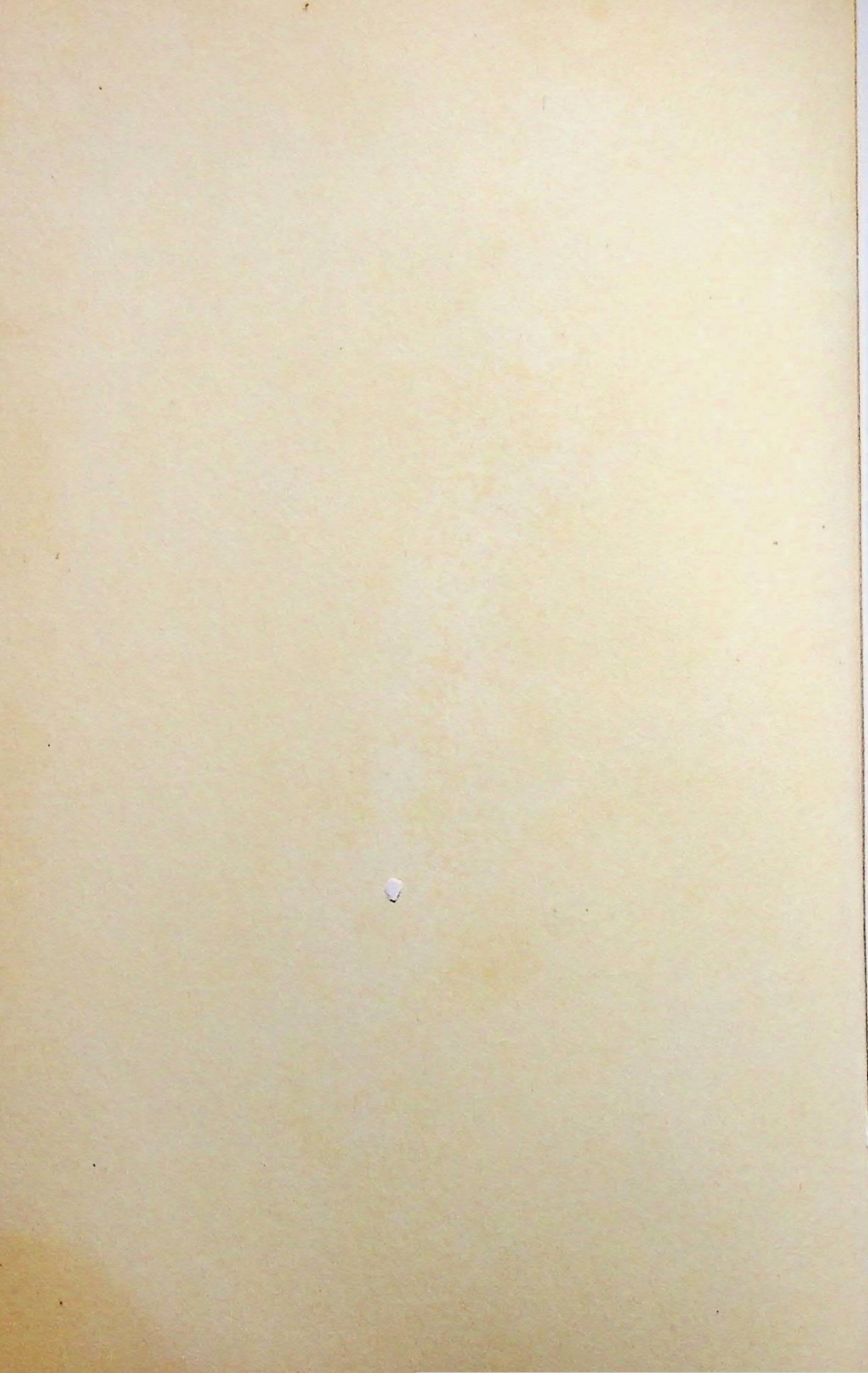
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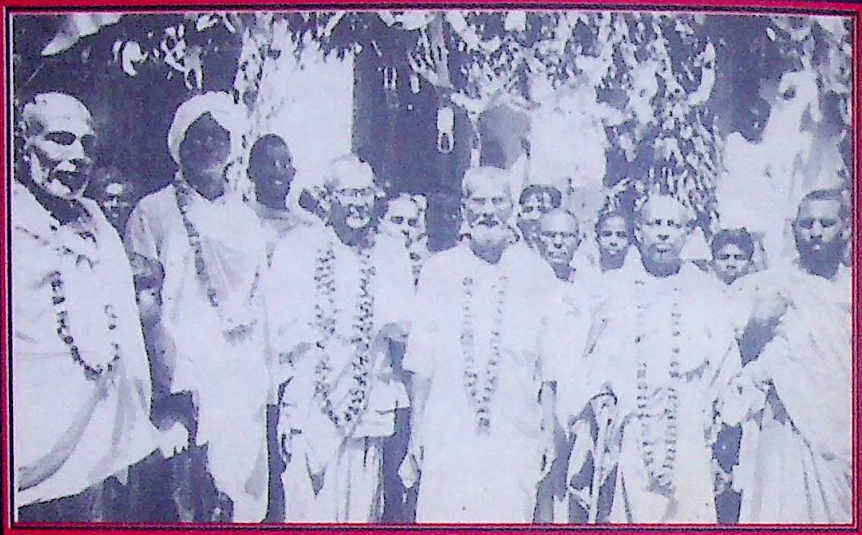
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From left to right: Śrīla Bhakti Pramode Purī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Sarvasva Giri Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Vicāra Yayavāra Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Vedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.

**What to speak of the other
Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas of today, even in
the Śāṅkara sampradāya, we see a unity
and anugatya, or adherence to the
principles of predecessors, which is
lacking everywhere in our Gaudīya
Sampradāya. Therefore, with folded
hands, it is our earnest prayer that,
after deeply and seriously studying this
Prabandha Pañcakam, the camaraderie
within the pure sampradāya may be
protected and preserved.**